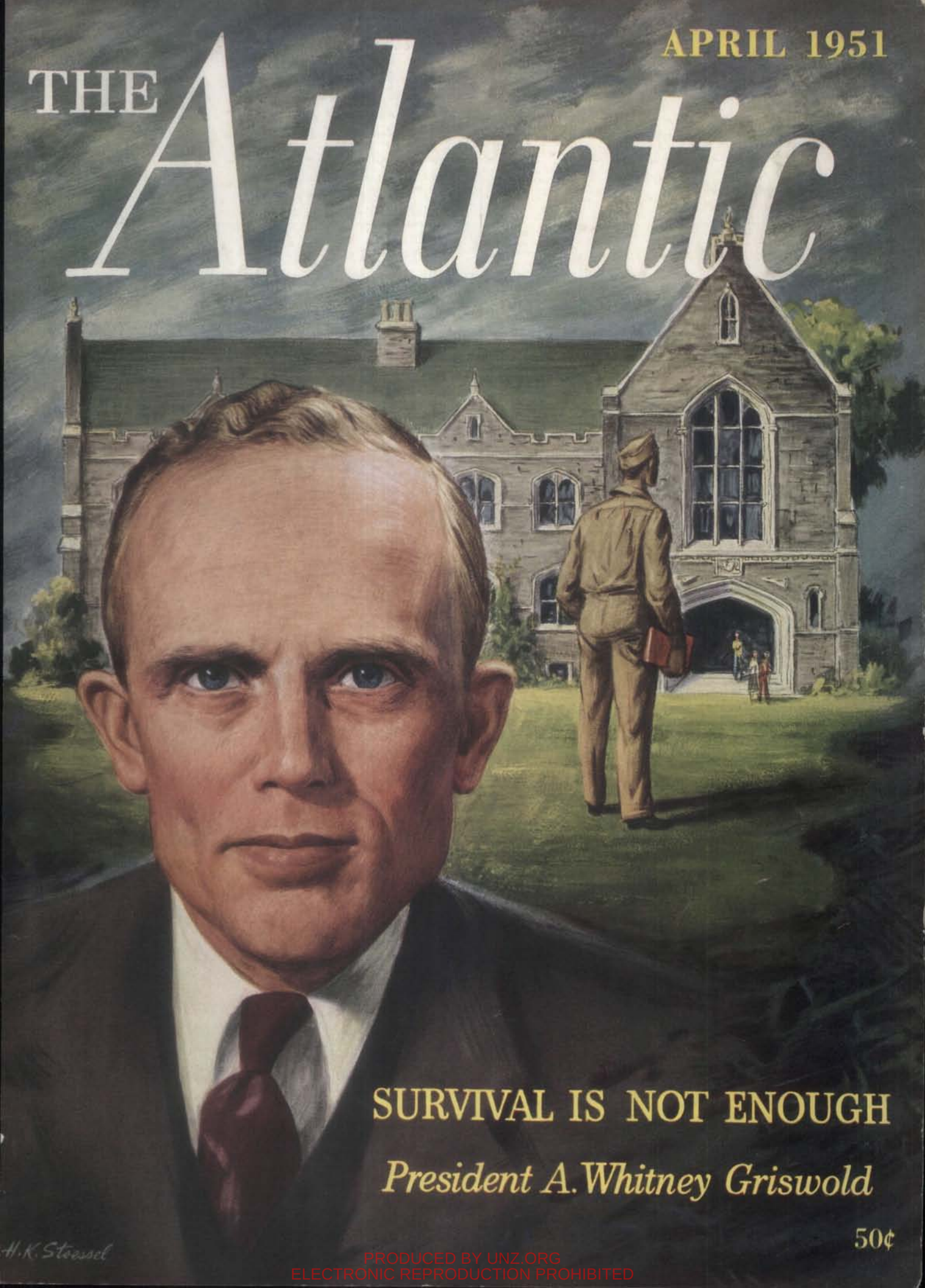
APRIL 1951

THE Atlantic



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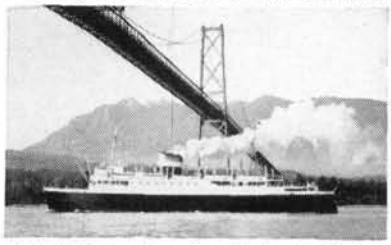

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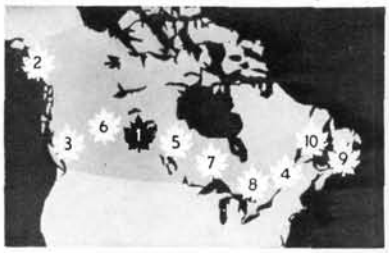

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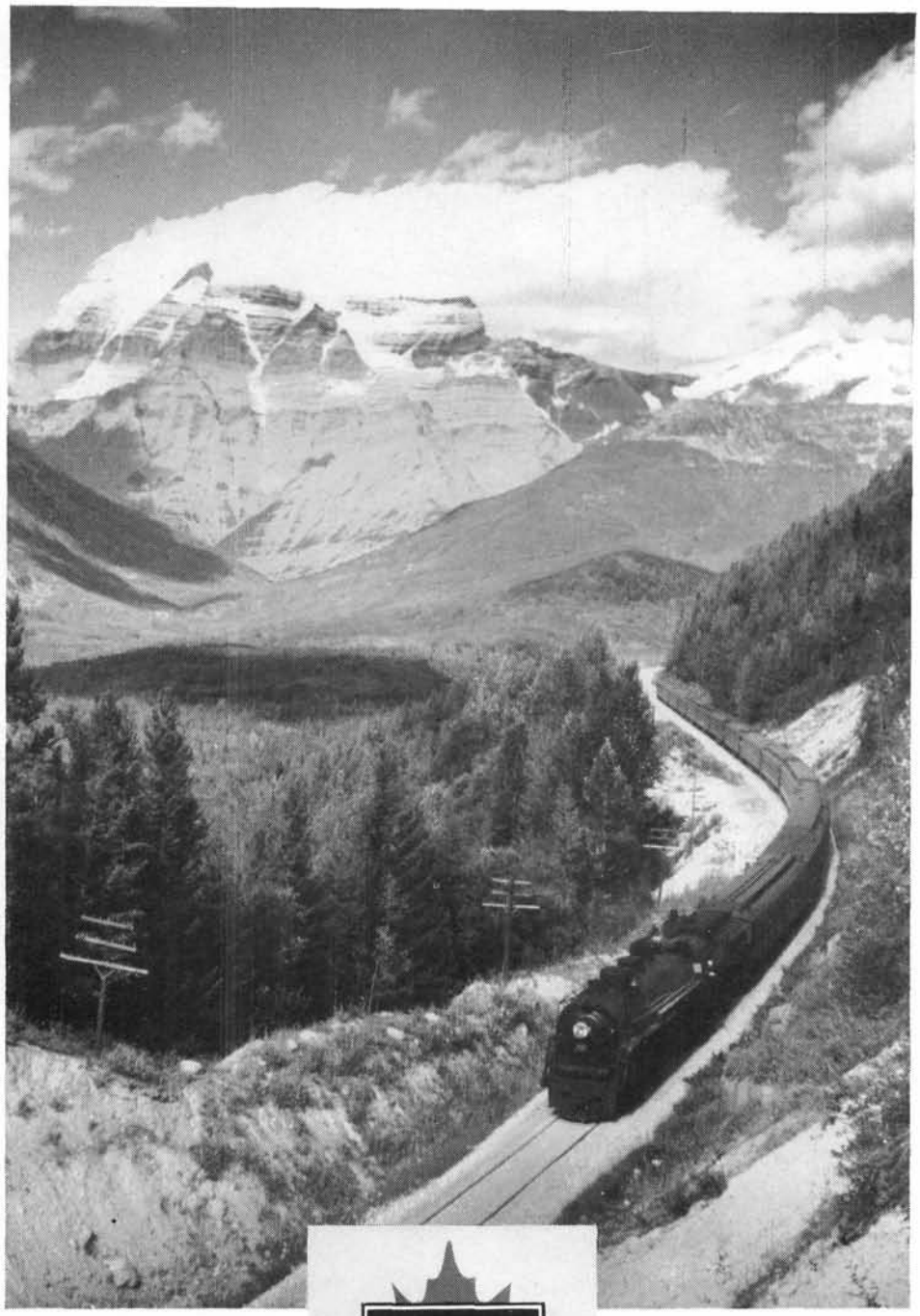

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THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, April, 1951, Vol. 187, No. 4. Published monthly. Publication Office, 10 Ferry Street, Concord, N.H. Editorial and General Offices, 8 Arlington St., Boston 16, Mass. 50 cents a copy, $6.00 a year. Unsolicited manuscripts should be accompanied by return postage. Entered as second-class matter July 15, 1918, at the Post Office at Concord, N.H., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Printed in the U.S.A., by Rumford Press, Concord, N.H. Copyright 1951, by The Atlantic Monthly Company. All rights, including translation into other languages, reserved by the Publisher in the United States, Great Britain, Mexico, and all countries participating in the International Copyright Convention and the Pan-American Copyright Convention.

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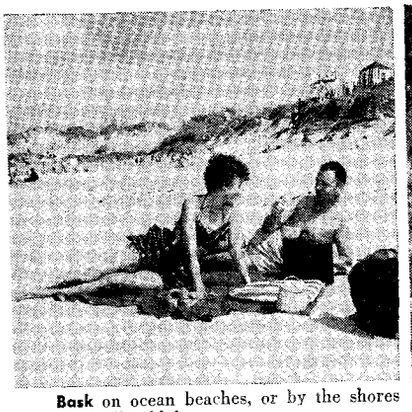

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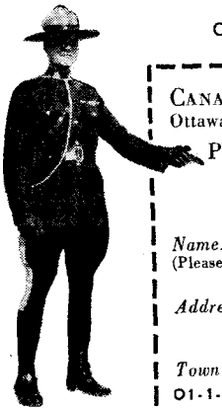

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THE ATLANTIC REPORT
on the World today

Israel

ALMOST the entire southern half of Israel is a hot, waterless desert, the Negev, with temperatures running up to 110 degrees. A large part of the rest of the country is also wasteland, neglected for almost two thousand years, its rich topsoil of ancient days carried away by torrents and wind, miles of fields literally covered with rocks of all sizes.

There is not a pound of coal, not a drop of oil, not an ounce of iron anywhere. The forests were cut down many centuries ago, and practically every stick of wood has to be imported. No wonder that many an international commission charged with evaluating the possibilities of resettling Palestine came to the conclusion that it could not be done.

The fighting between Arabs and Jews stopped about eighteen months ago. But peace has not been concluded yet and there is no sign of an early settlement. On the contrary, tension between the one million Jews in Israel and their more than 30 million Arab neighbors continues. Hostilities could break out again any time. But despite this numerical inferiority the Israeli are confident that the account which they gave of themselves in 1948 will prevent the Arabs from attacking once more. In the meantime, this nation of 1.2 million Jews and 175,000 Arabs, settled on an area of about 8000 square miles of land, has set out to build a modern democratic state out of practically nothing.

The newcomers pour in

When the British left not quite three years ago, there was no government, no army, no police, no civil service to run the state. Officials had to be recruited from the street. They had to learn as they went along. But they survived the initial chaos, only to face even more difficult tasks.

The biggest problem is how to cope with the human flood which has been pouring in ever since the state was created. In two and a half years Israel has received nearly 600,000 immigrants, far more than had arrived in the past thirty years. True, roughly half a million Arabs fled in the course of the war. But the absorption of 600,000 newcomers is a formidable task. They are still arriving at a rate of nearly 20,000 a month. This influx is expected to add another half a million people by 1953. By way of comparison: this would be equivalent to an immigration of about 70 million people to the United States over a three-year period.

The newcomers — most of them destitute, without a penny — come from sixty-three countries. You can see them leave the boat at Haifa or the government-chartered airplane at Lydda with all their earthly belongings tied up in two bundles. They cannot speak to each other for lack of a common language. They come from different civilizations and different social strata. There is the world-famous scientist, artist, or big industrialist from Central Europe, the peddler from the Balkans, the primitive craftsman or street vendor from North Africa, the little tradesman from the Middle East.

Take the example of the 50,000 dark-skinned Yemenites who were flown here from their former isolated country near Aden. Most of them had never used a knife and fork before. Given beds in the immigration camp, they were found lying underneath them the next morning.

The difficulties and dangers of integrating people of vastly different background into a homogeneous society were perhaps best summed up by then Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion when he referred

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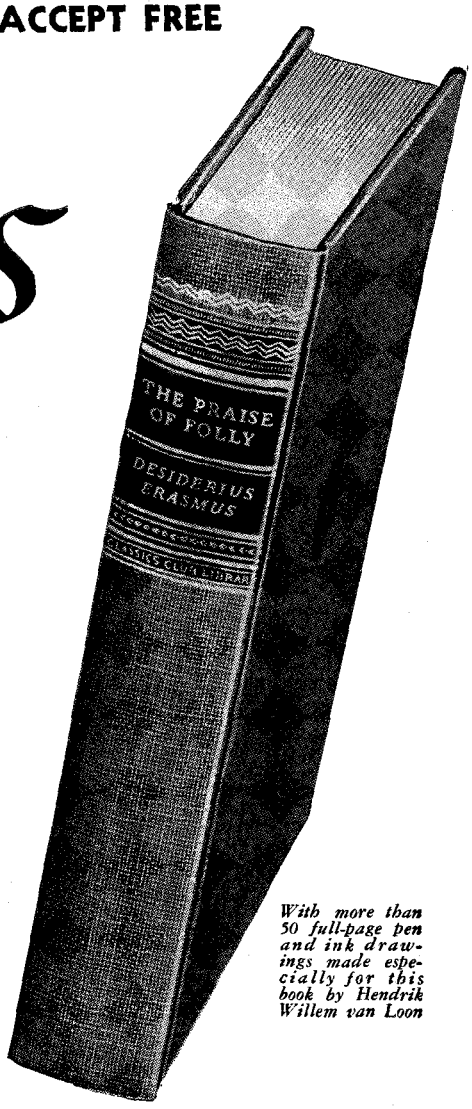

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to Israel as "not a melting pot but a pressure cooker." Native Palestinians and older settlers who have built the present state and given it its character have the choice of absorbing the newcomers and winning them over to Western civilization on which Israel is built, or of being swallowed up themselves and seeing their country follow Oriental patterns of life and culture. This amalgamation is one of the most dramatic struggles in Israel today.

The religious issue

The religious problem, too, has been complicated by the mass influx from countries where orthodoxy is much stronger than in Western or Central Europe. The Sabbath is fully observed. There are no movies or theaters, and few cafés, open on Saturday. Buses don't run. Traffic comes almost to a standstill, and there have been incidents when zealots burned or stoned cars in the streets of Jerusalem on a Saturday.

Many newcomers, especially those from Eastern Europe, Arab countries, and North Africa, are orthodox and have strengthened the religious camp. But their opponents do not object to religion as such. The Socialists, for example, demand separation of Church and State but observe the traditional holidays and customs even though these holidays and customs may have a more national, secular meaning for them. In mid-February the struggle between those who insist that religious tradition should influence the nation's laws and those who advocate strict separation of Church and State caused the fall of the Ben-Gurion government.

The newcomers have also intensified an already existing trend toward private property and away from collectivism. Before and after World War I, immigrants from Eastern Europe particularly formed collective settlements which strictly banned private property or profits. These young men and women saw a dream of a new Communist society. There were no personal profits. The settlement, called a kibbutz (collective), supplied housing, food, clothing, and all other needs. It took care of schooling the children and nursing the sick. If a member of a kibbutz wanted to go to town, to attend a movie, or to buy any extras like cigarettes, newspapers, or books, he had to receive the money from the group's treasury. The kibbutz also cared for parents or relatives, if necessary.

This type of collective society, the result of a revolutionary era, was influenced by the upsurge of Socialism in Europe and Communism in Russia. It was also the expression of an idealistic groping for a new way of life. Above all, it was peculiarly fitted to overcome the initial difficulties of the pioneer settlements of that era.

Gradually, things have changed. In recent years the original equalitarian principles have lost a good deal of their former attraction for the older, maturer colonists. They have not abandoned the system of collective work and profits. But they have come to emphasize more strongly individual housing, greater comfort, larger shares in the earnings of the kibbutz.

This trend has received an even greater impetus with the arrival of immigrants after World War II, and the creation of the new State of Israel has brought about a dramatic change. The overwhelming majority of the immigrants want their own houses and livestock. The land is usually owned by the Jewish National Fund but leased to the settler for ninety-nine years, with an option for renewal of the lease afterwards. He can sell or give away the house as well as the rest of his property whenever he chooses to do so and pass on the lease of the land, subject to the approval of the Jewish National Fund.

It is the plan of the government to settle about 25 per cent of the population on the land. Most of the money for the creation of these settlements comes from America. Without this support Israel could not have survived, and would collapse if such large-scale aid were stopped. A long-range program seeks to make Israel self-supporting. Today she is far from that goal and will hardly reach it until well after the end of the mass immigration.

No luxuries

At present this nation has a huge foreign trade deficit. Exports in 1950 paid for only a little more than one seventh of the imports. The food bill alone ran up to 70 million dollars despite the fact that agriculture has increased its output by 75 per cent in two and one-half years. The food supply was utterly insufficient when Palestine depended on food from the Arab lands. Now the Arabs no longer trade with the Jews. Besides, Israel must feed the huge number of immigrants, many of whom are just starting to produce.

The result has been a pressing food shortage and an austerity much stricter than in Great Britain. Meat is practically nonexistent although foreigners who can pay in hard currency can get it. Coffee, chocolate, and many other items are luxuries, also reserved for tourists with dollars. Few adults have seen milk or honey in recent months; what little there is goes to children and to the sick.

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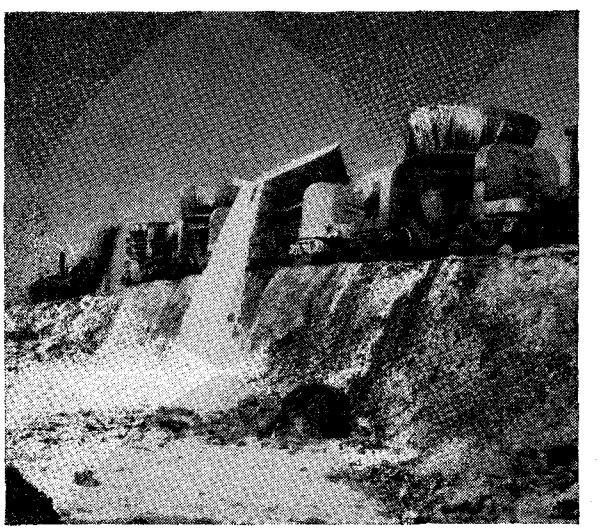
OLD SLAG PILES HELP MAKE STEEL FOR JETS

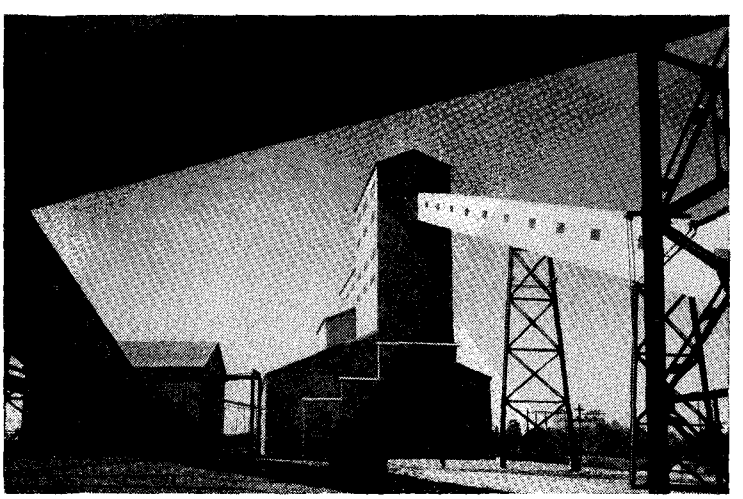
New ideas and hard work are pushing up America's steel production at the fastest rate in history. Steel mills have big appetites . . . This page tells some interesting things about what is being done to feed them.

1 **SUPERHOT:** This man uses a micrometer to get the blades of this impeller for a turbo-jet plane just right. It must stay true in an inferno of blazing gases. Enormous quantities of the toughest alloy steels are needed for defense. See picture #2 for new source of scarce alloying metal.

2 **READ THIS PICTURE BACKWARDS:** Years ago this stream of molten waste was poured on a slag pile. Today, slag is being re-processed to recover the small amounts of scarce alloying metals that make steel tough enough for tanks, planes and guns.



3 **WET-WASH FOR FUEL:** Over 600,000 Americans, working for more than 200 steel companies, are in a competitive race to produce more steel. That results in new ideas, new methods. This plant cleans coal so that furnaces can step up production by hundreds of tons per day.



Inflation comes when goods are scarce. The zooming steel production of America's independent steel industry has left the rest of the world far behind. Some day this steel production will lick the armament problem and make steel for home and business plentiful again.

If you want more facts on the growth of American steel production, write for reprints from Steelways magazine titled, "Metallurgy Bucks A Heat Wave", "Mn and the Iron Curtain", and "Coal Comes Clean", American Iron and Steel Institute 350 Fifth Avenue, New York 1, N.Y.

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In general, living standards are likely to drop still further. The per capita income is about 250 Israeli pounds annually, which is about $700 at the arbitrarily set official rate of exchange of $2.80 for the pound. However, conversion at the free exchange rate of about $1.30 would more accurately express the purchasing power of the per capita income.

But the nation's economy has already passed its lowest point and is now improving. For example, up to 1949 all fertilizer had to be imported. In 1950, production was begun from imported raw materials; in 1951, Israel will produce all the fertilizer she needs; in 1952, fertilizer will be exported. A similar situation prevails in the case of oil. In 1949 all fuel oil was imported. In 1950 crude oil was imported and two thirds of the country's consumption was refined here. In 1951 all oil will be refined in Israel.

Industrial plants are being set up, some with the aid of foreign investors, such as the Kaiser-Frazer assembly plant at Haifa. The factory, which starts operating this month, will turn out twenty cars and five trucks daily. They are to be sold in Eastern Europe and Middle Eastern soft currency countries on barter terms, thus permitting Israel to purchase food and raw materials which would otherwise have to be bought in the United States. Since tires, glass, plastics, and seats are to be manufactured in Israel only the parts coming from the United States must be paid for in dollars.

Building the new land

In order to induce foreign investment, the Israel government permits annual repatriation for an unlimited period of profits totaling up to 10 per cent of the original investment. But while inviting foreign capital, Israel has big plans of its own. There are undeveloped areas everywhere, land that waits for redemption through irrigation and fertilization, villages and towns which spring up like mushrooms after the rain, and cities which have doubled and trebled their population within a few years. Throughout the country there is a smell of fresh plaster in the air.

Immigrants are brought into huge temporary camps to tents and aluminum huts until they have been processed and jobs have been secured for them. In the meantime permanent small homes go up on the plots allotted to prospective farmers, while municipalities erect apartment houses by the dozen and assume the responsibility of finding work for their new citizens. There is keen competition for every able-bodied man and woman because their hands are needed to rebuild war-torn villages deserted by their former Arab inhabitants, to care for orange groves which would waste away if not properly irrigated.

Above all, growth is part of military security. There are few points in Israel where the frontier — and this still means the enemy — is farther away than 25 miles. The sites for new settlements are chosen not only for reasons of production and commerce but also with regard to defense. Israel cannot afford to keep up an army large enough to guarantee quick action in case of a border incident or a full-scale invasion. Thus the farm settlements are planned as links in a chain of defense outposts and each of them is built around a strong point. Every settler is expected to plow when he can, shoot when he must.

Hope in the Negev

By far the biggest project, an undertaking of which the entire nation talks, is the colonization of the Negev. Today the Negev is a sun-parched, stony wasteland. Tomorrow, they hope, it will be the treasure chest of the state.

The number one problem is water. If enough wells can be found, or if sufficient water can be brought down from the north, the Israeli estimate that the Negev will accommodate 500,000 settlers and feed 1.5 million people. This is more than the entire population of Israel today. Hopes for oil are also high. But even if they should be disappointed, experiments with solar energy hold out another possibility; the intense sunshine of nine months without a cloud and mostly blue skies for the rest of the year may eventually provide the electric energy the nation requires.

The people of Israel — layman, expert, and government leader — have no doubt that their dreams will become realities before long. The word "impossible" does not exist in their vocabulary. The record of accomplishments in the first three years of the new state makes it hard to doubt their ultimate success.

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Washington

THE President's boiling point is becoming a problem of national significance; no President should speak so freely, especially a man of Mr. Truman's impetuosity. At the press conference, of course, replies have to be made extemporaneously. Here the President's irritation is a constant revelation. Though he has been persuaded to say "No comment" to a delicate query, he cannot be restrained when a loaded question involves one of his associates. The jest now is that if a crony wants to insure his job, the thing to do is to get into a jam and then spill it to the papers; Mr. Truman will back him up through thick and thin.

This belligerent defense of cronies under fire is a constant bar to better relations between Congress and the Executive. Take, for instance, the President's reaction to the Congressional subcommittee report on the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. The President has never forgiven the chairman of that committee, Senator J. William Fulbright, for his precipitate suggestion after the mid-term election in 1946 that the President should take the lead in setting up a coalition government.

Senator Fulbright and his associates had done a conscientious job in ferreting out deficiencies and running down instances of pressure tactics by persons close to the Administration. They took their findings to the White House. It was their hope that Mr. Truman would dispense with the need to publish the material by agreeing to reorganization. However, they were rebuffed, and the Senatorial group had no option but to make the report of the investigation public. Not only did the President dub the record "asinine"; he submitted to Congress for renomination the names of the very RFC directors who had been criticized.

The following week, however, the President changed his mind and sent to Congress a plan for the reorganization of the RFC under a single administrator, much as the Fulbright committee had asked for.

The RFC is an octopus of a corporation which lends, buys, produces, and sells. Its assets are expected to exceed a billion dollars by the end of 1952. Government in business, indeed! It grew like Topsy out of the emergency of the depression, and there never seemed an opportunity to wind it up. There was such a movement a while ago; then the cold war started to grow hotter, and it seemed wiser to keep the institution in being pending other emergency needs. Nobody would advocate liquidation now. But there should be a thorough going over of RFC operations at public hearings.

The RFC is important enough to be maintained as an independent agency, for the pressure for political loans would be spurred, not lessened, if the RFC were related intimately to the Administration. The consensus is that protection of the public interest requires a nonpolitician at the head of the institution, and its divorcement from nondefense lending. There is, of course, no ideal solution. Direct government lending, as the Hoover Commission reported, "opens up dangerous possibilities of waste and favoritism to individuals or enterprises," inviting "political and private pressure, even corruption."

Lovett's special job

Everybody is agreed that the control of inflation requires that nondefense expenditure be cut to the bone as long as the emergency lasts. But the possibilities of saving money on defense itself are important and pressing.

Naturally the military heads of the three services will ask for all that the traffic will bear so long as Congress regards the sky as the limit for military appropriations. They leave it to the civilian secretaries to do the cutting.

For the most part this responsibility is passed on to Secretary Marshall and Deputy Secretary Lovett. This means Mr. Lovett, the most burdened official in the Capital, and a man with a truly civilian mind. He knows, as few men do, that the Pentagon itself has a part to play in the fight against inflation, and he has recruited expert accountants to act as watchdogs of the military purse.

It was mentioned some time ago in these notes that the three civilian secretaries had formed a sort of joint committee of their own. The idea was to have an opposite group to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

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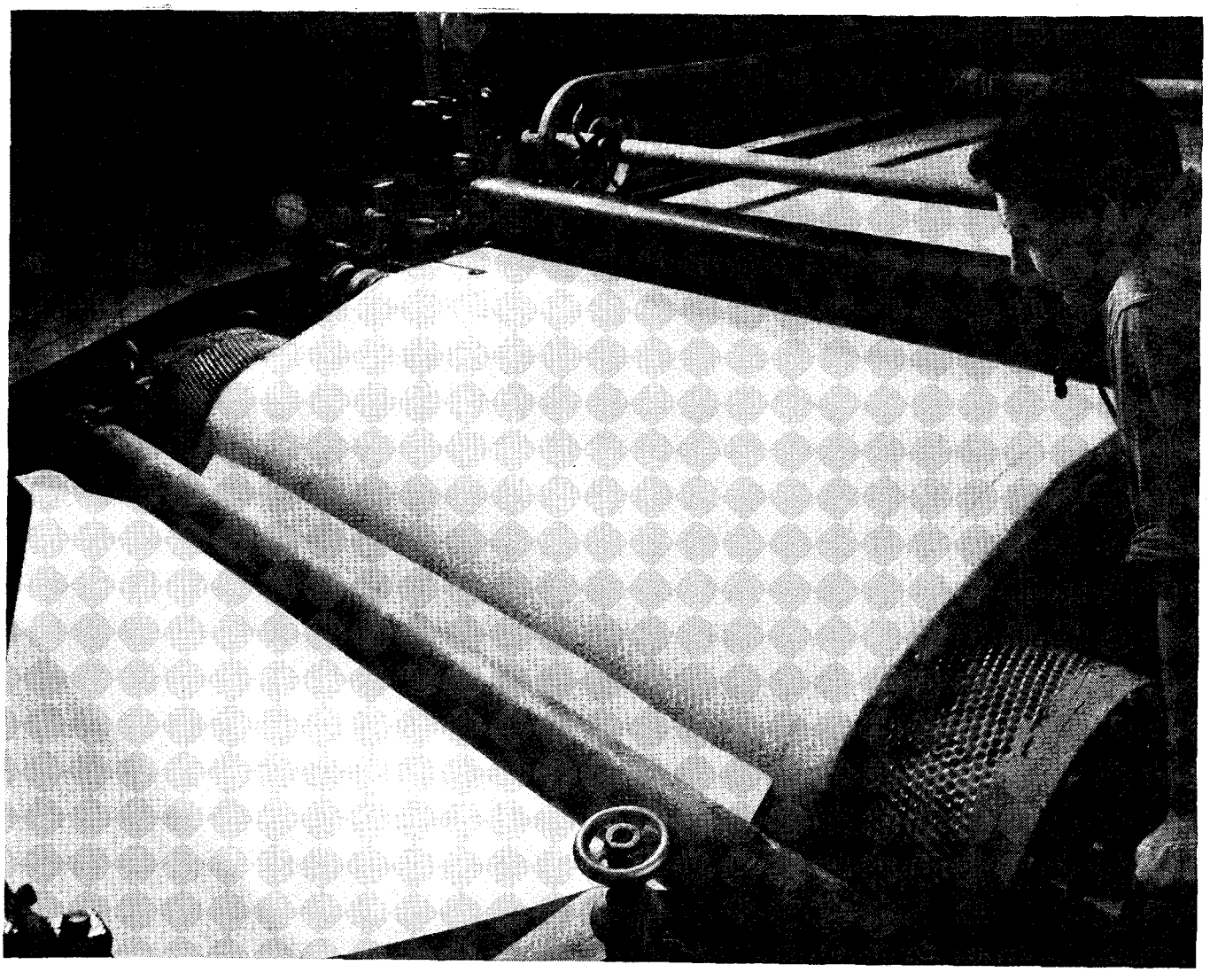

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I met New England

. . . when my best customer spoke frankly

"Jim," he said, "we've done business together for twenty years, but you're up against a squeeze play this time."

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"Well, here's how it looks to me," he replied. "Those young competitors of yours are out after business in New England. They know, just as you do, that this is a rich, important, fast-growing market, but they've been smart enough to go after it by building a plant right in the center of it and you haven't.

"They're offering us better service, quicker deliveries. Their line's already showing the perfection New England's famous for because they're using New England's skilled labor — and you know that's tops. They're in and out of New England's great research institutions every day and that alone is an advantage that could put them out front and keep them there. They'll be the ones we'll be doing business with, unless . . ."

"Unless I get smart too," I interrupted.

"Well, I just thought I'd mention it," he said. "It's worth thinking about. Particularly when you realize that in a single year more than 5,000 new enterprises and industrial buildings have started in New England!"

It *was* something to think about. It's got me a new warehouse in New England already. And when my new plant's up, I'm going to make it something for my competitors to think about too.

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But the innovation seems in danger of perishing of inaction.

This is not the secretaries' fault. The trouble seems to be that the military chiefs have become more important in the life of the Pentagon as a result of the advent of Secretary Marshall. Marshall, contrary to some reports, "runs" the department, but he is more at home with military men than with civilians. Thus he is more apt to lean on the Joint Chiefs than on the civilian secretaries. This is what vests Mr. Lovett's job with special significance. He is a tower of strength in a situation which could easily become top-heavy with military influence.

Civilian supremacy is the cornerstone of American institutions which many Americans are apt to overlook. It is especially in the custody — on the Executive side — of the President and his Secretary of State. But the stock of both has been going down. And that makes members of Congress and the public at large look more and more to the military.

Eisenhower and Taft

Only one man in the present experience has taken advantage of the situation, and that is General MacArthur, who has dabbled in politics, high and low. This cannot be said of the other military men. General Eisenhower is innocent of any political shenanigans, though he must know that no man in American life even approaches him in influence in present-day America. There is not a person in the Capital who thinks that he will use his lofty standing in any manner unbecoming to his uniform and rank in democratic America.

Taft's tilts at Eisenhower failed to shake that standing, and even recoiled on the Ohioan. There has been no strengthening of the Taft leadership in the 82nd Congress. Taft talks too much, is insensitive to the feelings of the back-bench Republicans. One discerns an undercurrent of resentment against him in GOP ranks. The plain fact is that no clear line of leadership is discoverable in his utterances. The men to whom the Republicans are increasingly turning are Warren, Duff, and Driscoll.

The VA fires Dr. Magnuson

Marquis W. Childs, no unfriendly critic of the Administration, recently itemized the agencies which had shown marked deterioration of administration. He said that a blight similar to the one which has come over the RFC has likewise affected the Civil Aeronautics Board, the Federal Power Commission, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the foreign service. This, he says, is by no means a complete list. It isn't. He could have added another agency: the Veterans Administration.

Congress is now inquiring into the firing of the medical director, Dr. Paul B. Magnuson. Dr. Magnuson refused to resign in deference to the request of the Administrator, Maj. Gen. Carl R. Gray, Jr. He wanted an investigation of the intrusion of political meddlers into the Veterans Administration which step by step has whittled away the independence of the medical department. The last straw for Dr. Magnuson, who is one of the most highly respected men in the Capital, was the appointment of a three-man board for the selection of hospital managers. Dr. Magnuson wasn't even consulted.

Of course, political interference in this agency is not limited to the Executive. Congressmen are guilty, especially in the location of hospital sites; but there is no hope for a public-minded administrator if he is assailed by *both* branches of government. What is basically wrong with the Truman administration, Mr. Childs concludes, is exemplified in this falling off in operating standards.

Treasury vs. Federal Reserve

The Treasury-Federal Reserve conflict has created a furor throughout the country. Credit control is an art beyond general comprehension. So it is no wonder that more heat than light has been shed on the squabble. For instance, an alarm has been sounded that the Federal Reserve has had all its powers of control subverted. That is plain nonsense. Within a week of the explosion, the Federal Reserve was putting further restraints on building credit. A lot of maneuver would be left to the Federal Reserve even if it failed to get the upper hand in the controversy with the Treasury.

The controversy has to do only with the long-term bonds of the government. These are pegged at par, yielding a 2½ per cent rate. The peg-

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ging is done by automatic purchasing of the bonds by the Federal Reserve system when they are offered for sale on the market. If the Federal Reserve refused to buy, then the bonds would fall, and this is what the Federal Reserve wants to bring about. It would re-enter the market when the fall had been sufficient to make the yield 3 per cent instead of 2½ per cent. This would govern the long-term interest rate for all bonds, thus adding more restraint to borrowing, and so restricting credit inflation.

The Treasury thinks there are enough brakes to apply without applying this particular brake. It says the helpful anti-inflationary effect of a rise in the interest rate would be more than offset by the increased carrying charge of the public debt. This would add to the tax burden. Not only would the taxpayer suffer; the bondholder, seeing his existing securities devalued, would be hesitant about buying more bonds, thereby endangering future selling campaigns. So an imponderable is matched against a ponderable, with both sides making a good case, and the objective observer left in a state of bewilderment.

By far the majority opinion, even in Congress, is on the side of the Federal Reserve. Inflation is enemy No. 2, after Russia. And the business of credit creation and its impact upon the deflation-inflation complex is now more understood. Those who think the argument is even Stephen make the suggestion that Charles E. Wilson ought to settle it. It seems foolish for the two agencies to be at loggerheads over a matter of one-half of one per cent.

Nimitz and security

Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, as head of the newly created Commission on Internal Security and Individual Rights, has an assignment which has long been overdue. If the Commission had been set up a year ago, we might have been spared both the excesses of McCarthyism and the frightened invasion of our civil liberties. The task is to show the country a safe path between the Scylla of security and the Charybdis of freedom.

One of the first considerations which await the Internal Security Commission is the metamorphosis of

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the loyalty program for government employees. Seth Richardson, first chairman of the Loyalty Review Board, has been criticized for giving employees the benefit of the doubt. This was in conformity with the original mandate from the White House. Mr. Richardson let Remington through — not only because of the existence of this doubt, but also because the Board passes only on its view of "present loyalty."

After the conviction of Remington there was such a howl in Congress that Mr. Richardson's successor, former Senator Hiram Bingham, has laid down the rule that any doubt must be resolved in favor of the government. This doctrine flies in the face of legal standards but, beyond that, it must be viewed in the framework of existing practice. Employees can be fired out of hand in all sensitive agencies. This is a safeguard, and is cited by those who feel that Mr. Bingham's rule is a peril to freedom.

Mood of the Capital

The mood of the Capital is becoming increasingly sanguine over our situation in the world struggle. This is thanks to the expository work of Charles E. Wilson and Robert Lovett to members of Congress as well as visiting groups of the citizenry. Our present situation is so much better in terms of industrial capacity, contrasted with the onset of the last emergency, that those who were saying "All's lost" three months ago are beginning to be shamefaced.

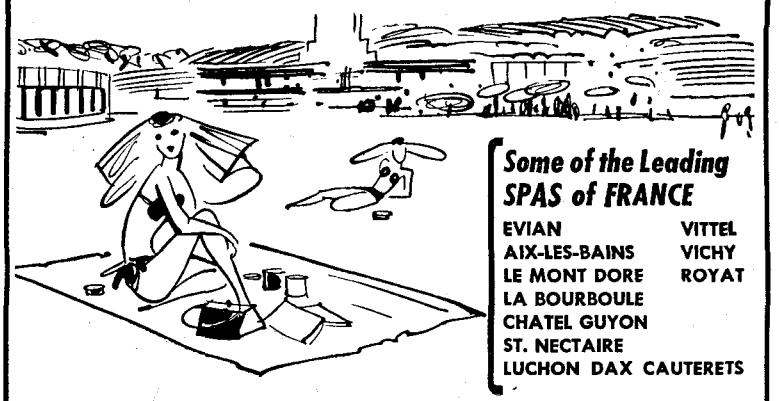
With this recognition of the facts, faith is more evident, though the uncertainty about Korea is troublesome. Everybody except the extreme China-firsters wants to avoid any bogging down in the quicksand of China. Yet every move in Korea seems to increase the involvement. The military appear to be aiming at winding up the adventure one way or another before the end of summer, for, aside from the danger of a permanent embroilment, they need the veterans back home to train the new army.

Secretary Marshall's appearance on the Hill sufficed to deliver the *coup de grâce* to those oppositionists who wanted to establish ratios of American strength in Europe against the counsel of General Eisenhower. His frankness is in refreshing contrast to the Administration's disingenuousness of eighteen months when the Atlantic Pact was under debate.

This is what rankled with the Senate. The Administration, mainly through Senator Connally, led the Senate to believe that no arms or manpower obligation was involved in ratifying a pact which pledged the signatories to develop a collective defense ahead of attack.

Senator Taft at the time protested against the Administration's misrepresentation, and his stand proves to have been well taken. At any rate, Secretary Marshall was not inveigled this time into making any pledges; he even refused to say that the four new divisions would be the limit of American assistance.

Another reason for the flop of the Republican campaign to establish quotas is the division in the Republican Party. Governor Dewey has ranged himself against Senator Taft. His support of the position of Eisenhower, whom he still sees as the Republican standard-bearer in 1952, had its influence upon Congress.



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The United Nations

THE initial decision of the Security Council to come to the aid of South Korea set in motion an explosive sequence which subjected the United Nations to the most severe strains. The decision to stop the aggression in South Korea was possible only because Jacob Malik was sulking in his Long Island tent, displeased over the continued presence of Nationalist China at the Council table.

This fact accounts to a large extent for the almost absolute authority entrusted to General MacArthur as supreme commander of the UN forces. When, on August 1, Mr. Malik returned as president of the Council, General MacArthur had all the authority and discretionary power he needed. It was his war and no Soviet veto could interfere with its conduct.

Another problem was the mobilization of United Nations forces. In Chapter VII of the Charter, detailed provisions are made for the contribution of armed forces, assistance, and facilities from Member States, under the direction of the Security Council with the advice and assistance of the Military Staff Committee. But, long before the current emergency, all attempts by the Council and the Military Staff Committee to plan for the organization of United Nations forces to be used in the case of aggression had collapsed because of the fundamental disagreement between the Soviet Union and the other permanent members of the Council.

The military action taken in Korea, therefore, had to be based on the forces available at the time. These consisted chiefly of the American forces under General MacArthur's command in Japan. Additional help in the form of troops, naval and air services, was later drawn from the United States, and men and supplies were contributed voluntarily by other Member States at the invitation of the Security Council.

The fact that, during the course of the war, the bulk of the military, naval, and air forces engaged in Korea have been American forces has obviously strengthened General MacArthur's position as supreme commander and made it more difficult for the United Nations to reassert its authority in important military and political decisions.

The first critical decision was faced late in September when representatives of the sixty nations were gathering at Lake Success for the fifth session of the General Assembly. By that time, United Nations forces in Korea, after their desperate defense of the Pusan beachhead, had struck north, carried out a brilliant amphibious operation at Inchon, reoccupied Seoul, and were facing the 38th parallel.

Crossing the 38th parallel

The question was: Should United Nations forces press their assault against the retreating North Korean forces beyond the 38th parallel? From a purely military point of view there was much to be said in favor of this action. To stop at the 38th parallel would allow the North Korean army to reinforce its units in preparation for a counter-offensive. By this time, United Nations commanders did not underestimate the fighting ability of the North Koreans. Moreover, if the intention of the United Nations action was not only to repel aggression but also to make possible the emergence of a free and unified state in the whole of Korea, then, it was argued, the United Nations had to assert its authority over the whole of Korea.

On the other side was the potent argument that to drive north of the parallel into North Korean territory was to risk a serious if not disastrous spread of the war. How real that danger was became known to the General Assembly on October 5 when Chou En-lai, the Foreign Minister of the People's Republic of China, warned that China "would not stand idly by" if the 38th parallel was crossed.

On October 7 the General Assembly took its first action on the Korean situation. It passed a resolution entitled "The Problem of the Independence of Korea," which recommended that steps should be taken "for the establishment of a unified and independent Government in the sovereign State of Korea" and insisted that United Nations forces should remain in Korea only long enough to achieve the objectives specified in the resolution. Other parts of the resolution called for the appointment of a Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea, mapped out its functions, and

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dealt with certain economic and rehabilitation measures which were considered essential.

It is claimed on good authority that the drafters of this resolution did not contemplate the crossing of the 38th parallel as a necessary step in its implementation. It must be admitted, however, that the vagueness of the resolution's language and the emphasis it placed on the unification and independence of Korea as a major United Nations objective provided some justification for the continued drive northward.

The Chinese Communists move

Three weeks after the passage of the General Assembly resolution Chinese troops were pouring over the Manchurian frontier. During the first week in November, General MacArthur's headquarters reported that at least three divisions were in action against United Nations forces which, having driven north in places as far as the Yalu River, were forced to retreat as much as 50 to 100 miles. The Chinese forces were then mysteriously withdrawn, and for two weeks there was a lull on the northern front.

This lull gave both the Security Council and the General Assembly an opportunity to consider the startling new crisis that had developed. It was quite clear not only that Chou En-lai had made good his warning but that the presence of United Nations forces close to the Chinese-Korean frontier was being considered by Peking as a direct menace to China's security.

On November 10 a resolution introduced into the Security Council calling for the retirement of the Chinese armies stated that once a united, independent, and democratic nation was established in Korea, United Nations forces would be withdrawn. The resolution went on to state that it was "the policy of the United Nations to hold the frontier with Korea inviolate and fully to protect legitimate Chinese and Korean interests in the frontier zone." On November 17, President Truman assured the Chinese government that the United States and the United Nations had no aggressive designs against China.

That the Peking government did not take these assurances very seriously was to be seen in a radio broadcast from Peking two days after the President had spoken. The broadcast claimed that America had lied and smashed its way across the world into Chinese territory, had seized Formosa, and was threatening another neighbor, Indo-China. In a note to the United Nations, it justified its aid to North Korea as aimed at repelling American aggression. In a further effort to quiet Chinese suspicions, on November 22 the Government of the United Kingdom, through its Chargé d'Affaires in Peking, reaffirmed United Nations objectives in Korea and insisted that the achievement of these objectives held no threat for the security of China or for its interests in the area.

Two days later, on November 24, General MacArthur launched his major offensive, designed to end the war, into territory close to and extending along the whole length of the Chinese frontier. Almost immediately the Chinese counteroffensive was launched in such mass that with great difficulty the United Nations forces were able to extricate themselves and fall back to positions far to the south.

The news of this disaster was presented to the Security Council on November 28 in a communiqué from the supreme commander announcing that "an entirely new war faced United Nations forces." It was on this day that Peking's representative, General Wu Hsiu-chuan, appeared before the Council. Refusing to answer directly to charges of Chinese aggression directed to him by the United States representative, Warren Austin, he repeated China's accusations of American aggression and justified the actions of Chinese "volunteers" who had crossed into Korea to participate in the great liberation struggle of the Korean people.

On November 30 the six-nation motion asking for the withdrawal of Chinese troops received a 9 to 1 vote in the Council. The single vote of the Soviet Union constituted a veto. At this point, decisive responsibility for the Korean situation passed to the General Assembly. On December 6 the Security Council resolution was assigned to the Assembly's Political Committee.

The General Assembly takes over

It had long been realized that the General Assembly would have to assume responsibilities in the Korean war which could not be carried by the veto-blocked Security Council. On November 3 a resolution originally introduced by Secretary of State Acheson passed the plenary session by an overwhelming vote.

This resolution established a procedure under which the Assembly, in cases of emergency and where the Security Council had failed to act, could mobilize the collective strength of the majority against a nation judged to be an aggressor. The resolution set up a Peace Observation Commission

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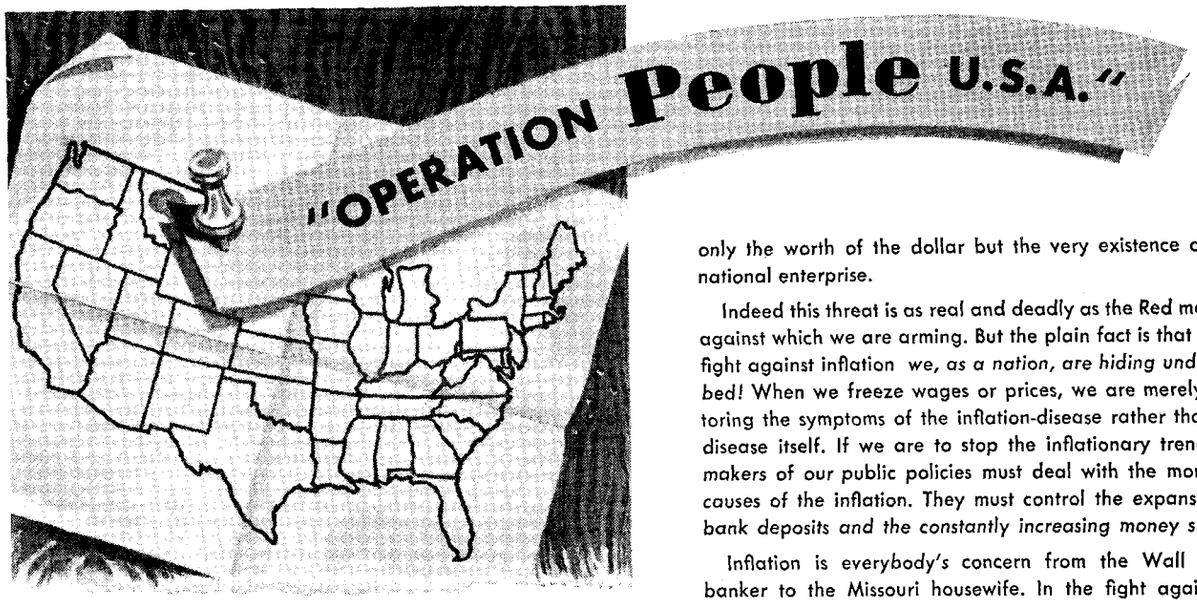

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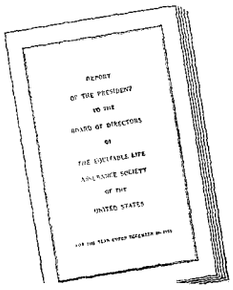
Thomas I. Parkinson President



*** For a more detailed statement of The Society's operations during 1950 write for a copy of the President's Report to the Board of Directors.**

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF CONDITION

as of December 31, 1950

Resources		Per Cent
***Bonds and Stocks**		
U. S. Government obligations	$ 726,482,517	(12.7)
Dominion of Canada obligations	299,419,790	(5.2)
Public utility bonds	795,849,372	(14.0)
Railroad obligations	521,420,938	(9.1)
Industrial obligations	1,680,552,354	(29.5)
Other bonds	151,531,351	(2.7)
Preferred and guaranteed stocks	90,455,667	(1.6)
Common stocks	8,642,995	(0.2)
Mortgages and Real Estate		
Residential and business mortgages	788,666,769	(13.8)
Farm mortgages	150,933,941	(2.6)
Home and branch office buildings	10,573,799	(0.2)
Housing developments and other real estate purchased *for investment*	129,056,089	(2.3)
Residential and business *properties*	6,997,068	(0.1)
Other Assets		
Cash	68,135,232	(1.2)
Transportation equipment	38,497,145	(0.7)
Loans to policyholders	142,478,440	(2.5)
Premiums in process of collection	48,119,219	(0.8)
Interest and rentals accrued and other assets	44,052,280	(0.8)
TOTAL	$5,701,864,966	(100)

Obligations		Per Cent
Policyholders' Funds		
To cover future payments under insurance and annuity contracts in force	$4,648,335,206	(81.5)
Held on deposit for policyholders and beneficiaries	323,281,234	(5.7)
Dividends and annuities left on deposit with the Society at interest	130,044,178	(2.3)
Policy claims in process of payment	28,191,420	(0.5)
Premiums paid in advance by policyholders	85,105,097	(1.5)
Dividends due and unpaid to policyholders	6,703,102	(0.1)
Allotted as dividends for distribution during 1951	80,650,408	(1.4)
Other Liabilities		
Taxes—federal, state and other	17,891,000	(0.3)
Expenses accrued, unearned interest and other obligations	8,789,419	(0.2)
Reserve for revaluation of Canadian *and other foreign currency accounts* at free market rates of exchange	13,617,000	(0.2)
Surplus Funds		
To cover all contingencies	359,256,902	(6.3)
TOTAL	$5,701,864,966	(100)

* Including $5,274,463 on deposit with public authorities.

In accordance with requirements of law all bonds subject to amortization are stated at their amortized value and all other bonds and stocks are valued at the market quotations on December 31, 1950, as prescribed by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners.

The Equitable Life Assurance Society of The United States

Thomas I. Parkinson • President

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and a Collective Measures Committee through which threats to the peace could be reported and acted upon. Previously, such actions had been the prerogative of the Council. The motion provided that the Assembly could be called into emergency session on 24-hour notice.

It might have been assumed that the General Assembly that had made this drastic decision would be prepared to take bold steps in the face of the Chinese threat. But by the time the Security Council resolution requesting withdrawal of Chinese troops reached the Political Committee the overriding concern among the majority of the members was to avoid a general war in Asia.

To the West European nations, involvement in war in Asia meant reduction in the quantity of aid available for Europe. To them, the Soviet Union and not China was the big threat. The nations of the British Commonwealth, with long experience in critical international relations, thought it was utterly unnecessary to become involved in an unlimited war. To the nations of Asia and the Near East — and these nations had played an increasingly significant role in recent assemblies — a war in Asia, with its East-versus-West connotations, was the eventuality most to be feared.

U.S.-British rift

The most serious rift at this time developed between the policy of the United States and that of the United Kingdom, the two major powers on whose unity of purpose depended the security of the West. Almost at the very moment when in London Foreign Secretary Bevin was urging that the first essential was to stabilize the military situation in Korea and explore a political settlement, in Washington President Truman was speaking about strengthening military defenses in order to meet the threat of aggression elsewhere and was mentioning with too much ambiguity the possible use of the atom bomb. It was the atom bomb reference, overplayed in the world's press, that brought Prime Minister Attlee to Washington to urge moderation in American policy. Truman and Attlee were in conference in Washington when the Korean question once more came on the agenda of the Political Committee.

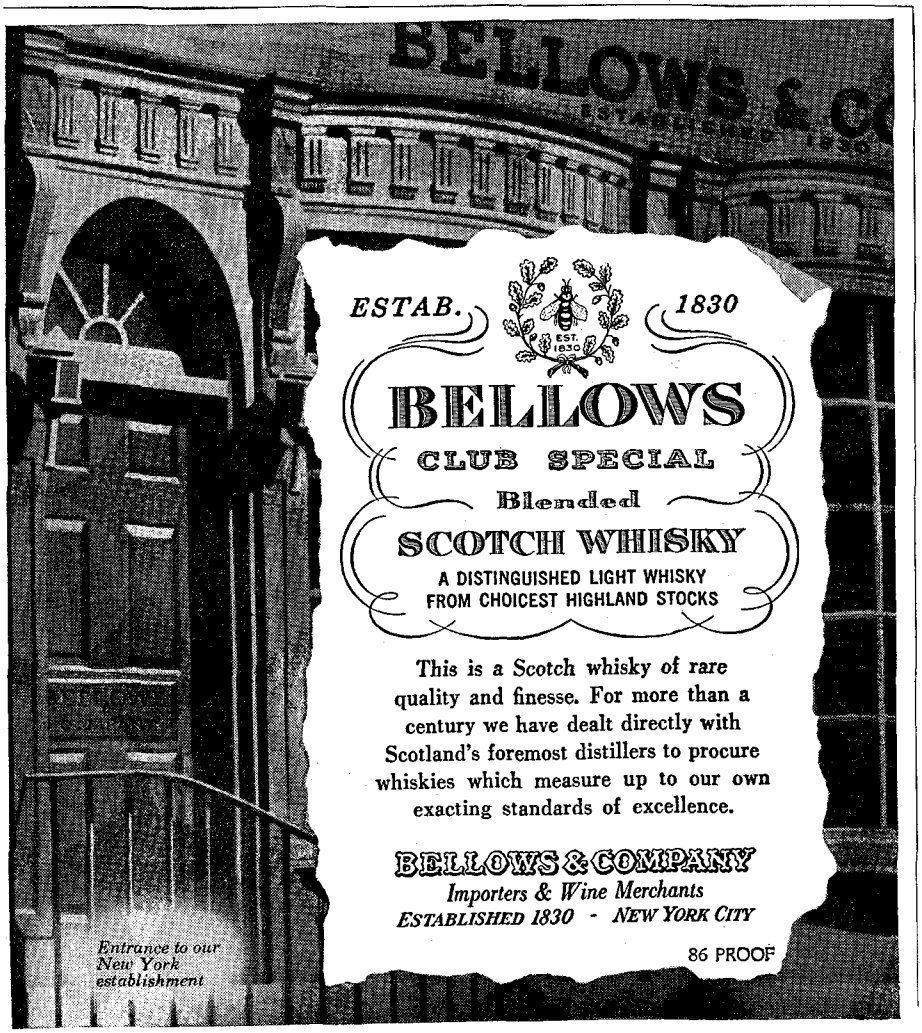
The temper of the Assembly was revealed by the fact that priority was given not to the Security Council resolution but to action sponsored by thirteen Asian and Arab states, under the leadership of Sir Benegal N. Rau of India, which pointed towards a cease-fire and a negotiated settlement of the Korean war. A similar proposal had been made a few days earlier in a speech at Ottawa by Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs, Lester B. Pearson.

In two resolutions the Asian-Arab group suggested that the President of the Assembly, Nasrollah Entezam of Iran, name a three-man committee, including himself, to "determine the basis on which a satisfactory cease-fire in Korea could be arranged," and that a second committee be appointed to "make recommendations for a peaceful settlement of existing issues in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations."

The first resolution was adopted with little delay on December 14; only the Soviet group objected. The second resolution was not voted on. The President named Sir Benegal and Mr. Pearson as the other members.

The first task of this cease-fire committee was to draft a working basis for negotiations which might lead to a peaceful settlement. The elements in this proposal, which was presented to the Political Committee on January 11, were, first, the working out of arrangements for the cease-fire which could be done if there were a lull in hostilities; second, provision for the withdrawal from Korea of all non-Korean forces so that, without pressure, the Korean people under international provision could decide their own future; third, the working out of international arrangements for the administration of Korea and the maintenance of peace until such time as national authorities were constituted; fourth, negotiations of outstanding issues in the Far East, including the question of the admission to the United Nations of the People's Republic of China and the question of the future of Formosa.

With military events still going against the United Nations forces, the Soviet Union interpreted this proposal as a device to enable UN armies to regroup and consolidate. The first reply from the Peking government



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echoed, to some degree, the Soviet attitude. At the request of the Canadian and British Prime Ministers, additional clarification of the Chinese reply was sought through India's ambassador in Peking.

In its second statement, the Chinese government accepted in principle the idea that the arrangement of a cease-fire should be the first order of business before a seven-nation conference as suggested by the good-offices committee. By this time it was apparent that the American government, exasperated by Chinese and Soviet attacks on their intentions in Asia, weighed down by the responsibilities of carrying the brunt of the war, subjected to the sharpest criticism in Congress and in the press for going along with the "appeasement" group, would credit Peking with no good faith in its reply. Austin, describing the Chinese clarification as "a transparent effort to divide the free world," dismissed it as "not much more than a postcard."

The "aggressor resolution"

By now a United States resolution to brand China an aggressor had gathered momentum and most of the nations who had rallied with hope behind the Asian-Arab cease-fire plan had, in their disillusionment with Chinese intentions, swung to its support. The majority, however, was not assured for the resolution until it became evident that the judgment was a "moral" one and not likely to be followed by sanctions of a serious nature.

Even when it came the vote was reluctant. Mr. Pearson, in pledging his vote, described the American resolution as "premature and unwise." Rau predicted that it would end all chances of negotiating a peaceful settlement. Walter Lippmann, pointing out that the vote had revealed that we have no important supporters in Asia, said: "The victory for which Mr. Austin said he thanked God is a self-inflicted American defeat."

No action in these days of uneasy balance is ever as final as it appears at the moment it is taken. The "aggressor resolution" marked the end of the first serious attempt to end the Korean war by negotiation. But the General Assembly, held in session months beyond its normal span, had not lost hope of averting the Big War.

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And as she passes by, you realize that here is a woman different from others not only in dress ... but in her entire way of life. Here is one who has deliberately turned her back upon the worldly pleasures which other women seek and enjoy. And perhaps you wonder why a woman should give up all this to become a Catholic nun.

Is it because she is afraid to face the world and its responsibilities? Is it because she lacks talents that other women possess and therefore seeks shelter in the convent? Is she devoid of maternal instinct? Or does she choose the life of a nun because she thinks it is easier and more secure than life in a world of fluctuating economic conditions?

No — a nun who will knock at your door asking for alms for the poor surely is not afraid of the world. A Catholic sister competent to teach in a school ... and often highly gifted in the arts and languages ... is surely not lacking in talents. Nor can anyone who has seen a Catholic nun mothering a grievously sick person in a hospital ... or even in a leper colony ... believe that she is lacking in the maternal instinct.

What is it, then, that prompts a woman to turn her back upon the pleasures and luxuries of the world for a life of poverty, chastity and obedience? How is it that hundreds of thousands of women do this ... many of them coming from well-to-do families which could supply their every need and wish? What is the spark that fires their zeal for God, and for humanity?

The answer is, of course, that the heart of a nun is filled with the desire to serve God. And that desire is the product of her Catholic Faith. If you doubt the compelling power of Catholic belief, remember this fact ... the Catholic Church is the only institution on earth having large numbers of such consecrated women who devote their lives to the work of Christ in schools and hospitals, in orphanages and old peoples' homes, and among the poor and sick in every land.

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LETTERS TO AND FROM THE EDITOR

"*The Doctors' Lobby*"

SIR:

When Dr. James Howard Means, in his article "The Doctors' Lobby" (October *Atlantic*), states that he is "no socialist," one might remark, "Well, then, Doctor, you had better take down your sign." He is certainly following the party line when he says that "the majority cannot afford medical care under the prevailing fee-for-service system, and in many places adequate personnel and facilities are not available."

Certainly the figures do not bear out the statement that the "majority cannot afford medical care." For example, only 60 per cent of New York's upstate families earn $3200, or more, a year. Yet in one county, even without employer help, 72 per cent of the people are covered by Blue Cross. Eleven out of every 100 Empire Staters require general hospital care each year. Per diem outlays per patient in 14 leading institutions rose from an average of $1.40 in 1888 to $14.61 in 1948, yet since 1888 the average patient's hospital stay has dropped from 52 days to 8½ days.

The statement that in some places adequate personnel and facilities are not available is undoubtedly true, but personnel — one doctor to every 710 of the population in this country — and facilities are available in greater quantity in this country than in any other country in the world except Israel, which has an abnormal situation because of the many displaced persons there.

But what does Dr. Means want to do about the relative shortage of doctors and facilities in some places? He talks as if it were the fault of the A.M.A. Can the A.M.A. force a doctor to live and practice in a particular place against his will? It cannot. Even the bill for National Compulsory Health Insurance does not provide for such a scheme. If the government did attempt such coercion, we would no longer be a free country. Several states are remedying the situation by offering scholarships to men who will go through medical school and enter practice in rural districts. Some localities that need doctors are offering office equipment and laboratory facilities in order to induce doctors to locate there. That is certainly the American way.

I deprecate Dr. Means's sarcastic remarks about the efforts of the A.M.A. to prevent the country's going socialistic. I also deprecate his intimation that the A.M.A. is about to practice coercion on its members. He intimates that this coercion would take the form of expulsion from membership, which would cut off the doctor's opportunity to keep in touch with his professional brethren. He also states that loss of hospital appointments might follow expulsion. It, of course, is not true that a doctor's opportunity to keep abreast of his profession is dependent on his membership in a medical society. Neither do I know of any hospital which makes membership in a medical society a requisite for membership on its staff.

Dr. Means seems to favor federal aid to medical schools, which the A.M.A. opposes. I am in accord with the A.M.A.'s opposition to such aid. The Supreme Court of the United States has ruled that what the federal government subsidizes it must control, and I for one do not want the federal government controlling our medical schools. The blight of bureaucracy is a damning blight. Dr. Means refers to the fact that many of our first-rate schools are already operated and supported by state governments. That is true, and of that I heartily approve. That is a local affair, not a federal affair. The foundation stone of democracy is local self-government.

AMOS R. KOONTZ, M.D.
Baltimore, Md.

Dr. Koontz seems to have missed the main points of my article: namely, that I object on professional grounds to the publicity campaign of Whitaker and Baxter, and I deplore the lack of any constructive action by the A.M.A. toward improving medical care and its distribution in the United States.

As to coercion of doctors by organized medicine for economic or social practices which it doesn't like, there are plenty of examples. The A.M.A. itself was once found guilty in federal courts of conspiracy in restraint of trade for doing just that.

Dr. Koontz deprecates what he calls my "sarcastic remarks about the efforts of the A.M.A. to prevent the country's going socialistic." That's his privilege, but a lot of good it will do him, because I told the truth. He had better read an Associated Press dispatch (Florence, South Carolina, February 10, 1951) in which Dr. Cline, the President-elect of the A.M.A., is reported to have said that "continuing to emphasize that socialized medicine is the opening wedge to full socialism" is one of four points the A.M.A. is now stressing.

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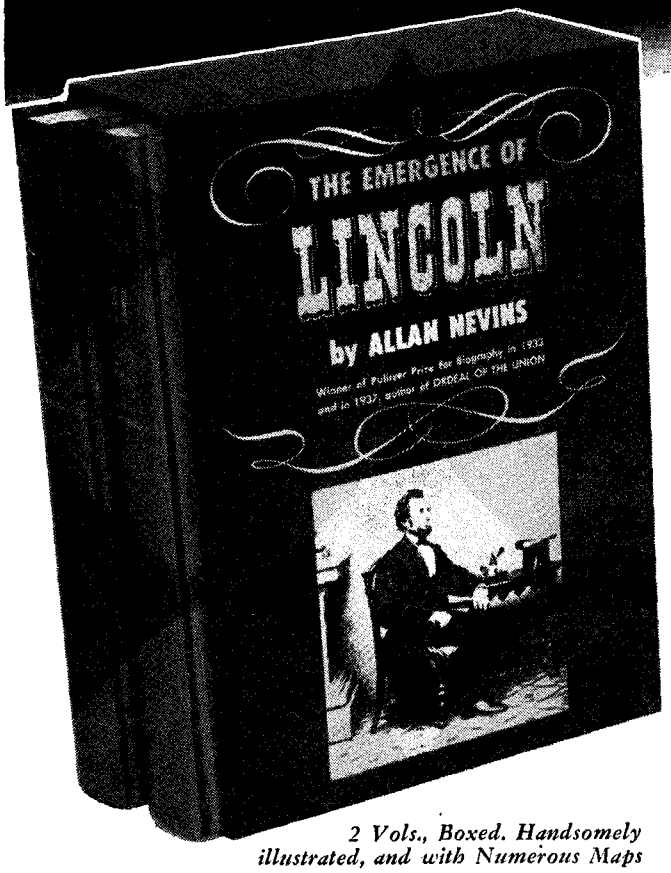

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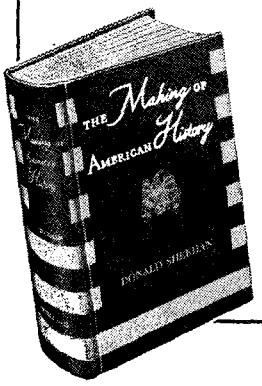

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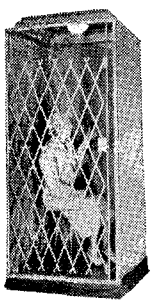

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Of course a national health program does not have to be "socialized medicine" anyway. — JAMES HOWARD MEANS, M.D.

"Criminals Who Get Away"

SIR:

I thought it might be of interest to you to know that some of the information contained in "Criminals Who Get Away" by Donald P. Wilson (February *Atlantic*) is definitely in error. For example, on page 55 he makes the flat statement, "A judge cannot try a plea of Not Guilty; it must be tried by a jury."

In the Cook County Criminal Court for the year 1949, the last for which we have complete records, there were 1958 dispositions on pleas of Not Guilty. Of that number there were 1438 findings of Guilty in cases which were tried by the judge without a jury. In the same category, there were 328 findings of Not Guilty in cases tried by the judge alone. There were only 192 verdicts by juries during that entire period, out of a total of 1958 dispositions. It is obvious from these figures that in criminal cases in Cook County, the great majority of all trials were before a judge without any jury. In these cases the jury was waived.

The situation in Chicago and Cook County is not an unusual one. In this connection you might desire to refer to the book entitled *Criminal Procedure from Arrest to Appeal* by Lester Bernhardt Orfield, Professor of Law, Temple University, which was published by the New York University Press in 1947. This book was based on very careful research under the auspices of the National Conference of Judicial Councils. Under the section entitled "Waiver of Jury Trial" beginning on page 390 and specifically on page 391, the following statement appears: "There has been an increasing evidence of the privilege of waiving trial by jury. Half a century ago waiver was common in Maryland and perhaps in West Virginia. At present it is permitted by constitution, statute or judicial decision in the federal courts and in more than half of the states."

There is a considerable amount of other information in the article which could be very seriously disputed as to its accuracy, and I believe that Mr. Wilson's lack of knowledge in the matter of such a simple reform as jury waiver gives an idea as to the lack of care with which he prepared this material. Some of the statements that he makes in the article leave the impression that he is discussing a current abuse, which may not be true. For example, on page 55 when he is discussing the bail bond situation in Chicago he refers to a situation which existed almost a quarter of a century ago. While there are still many abuses in the bail bond situation, this is not one of them at the present time. As a matter of interest, from December 6, 1948, to August 1, 1950, the bond department of the State's Attorney's Office of Cook County, Illinois, approved 2040 bonds, and of this total accepted during the same period there were but 11 bonds forfeited. During the year 1949 there were 108,976 bonds approved in the criminal branches of the Municipal Court of Chicago. Of this total only 696 were forfeited; and of that number, 518 forfeitures were set aside after the defendants were arrested and brought in court.

V. W. PETERSON, Operating Director
Chicago Crime Commission
Chicago, Ill.

SIR:

Whatever may be said of military courts-martial, there is nothing "unconstitutional" in the lack of a jury trial in those tribunals as suggested by Donald P. Wilson.

The Constitution gives Congress the power "to make rules for the government and regulation of the land and naval forces" (Sec. 8). The Fifth Amendment specifically exempts military courts from the requirement of jury trial. "No person shall be held to answer for a capital or other infamous crime unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces. . . ."

HAYDEN H. DADD
Attica, N.Y.

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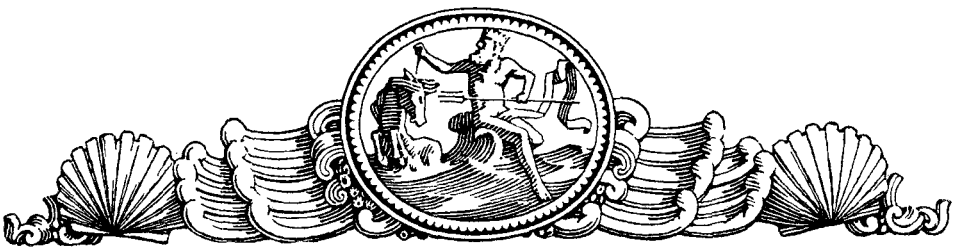

WHITNEY GRISWOLD, who is serving his first year as the President of Yale University, came to his authority after being educated at Hotchkiss and at Yale and after long and varied teaching experience. He was director of army foreign area and civil affairs training programs during the last war, and has served more than ten years on three school boards. In the paper which follows he defines the crisis now facing every American college and university. He suggests a program for those boys who will want to study after their military service, and he tells us that survival will not be enough if we allow ourselves to become a colossus without education.

SURVIVAL IS NOT ENOUGH

by WHITNEY GRISWOLD

COMMUNIST aggression in Asia has scored one tactical success not commonly recognized as such. It has struck a body blow at American higher education. Barely recovered from the disruptions of the Second World War, our colleges and universities are once more called upon to sacrifice their students, faculties, and curricula to military necessity. No one knows how great these sacrifices may be: the colleges may be confronted with the worst financial crisis in their history. If the lives of many private institutions be threatened, our public institutions will suffer and our whole educational system will be the poorer. If the long-run objective of Communism is to destroy our free society at its source, the farther we go toward stripping our colleges of students, dismissing their teachers, and "accelerating" their curricula, the nearer the Communists will have got to achieving that objective.

Such desperate measures can be justified in the name of national survival. We will fight to survive, and we will fight before our backs are to the wall, for our security and our principles. All this is clear in our history, our character, and our present actions. Our college students and professors share this destiny with their countrymen in every walk of life. They could not escape it if they wished to, and they do not wish to. But they have a mission in society, and the question is how much of that mission they can sacrifice without again "losing the peace" and perhaps even losing the war.

In the emergency, we talk of college education as a nonessential and an expendable. While we lavish our ingenuity and resources on the weapons of war, we neglect and even handicap the men who will use them. This is a high price to pay for survival. And what price survival if we become a headless monster?

Our colleges and universities are not ivory towers. They are wellsprings of humanistic and scientific learning and of the spirit that puts that learning to use in the cause of freedom. Their long-run value to our arts and sciences, to our whole ideal of a free society and a free culture, is hardly open to question.

And in the emergency? Never in the whole history of warfare has the strength of armies depended so much on their soldiers' — especially their officers' — articles of faith as it does today. What else has transformed the sleeping peasantry of Russia and China into great military machines? What has muffled the Voice of America and inhibited our efforts to preserve world peace but the impression we have given other people that, for all our wealth, generosity, and efficiency, we are "light half-believers in our casual creeds"? Cromwell's maxim, in obedience to which he made himself one of the world's great military geniuses, should be engraved on the walls of the Pentagon: "I had rather have a

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plain russet-coated captain who knows what he fights for and loves what he knows than what you call 'a gentleman' and is nothing else." The greatest source — greater than any other in our society and greater than all others put together — of American captains who know what they fight for and love what they know is our colleges and universities. The greatest, indeed the exclusive, source of the scientific learning and personnel necessary to sustain those captains in modern warfare is our colleges and universities. We tamper with that source at our peril. There is more identity between our long-run cultural interests and our short-run military interest than there is conflict.

2

How short will the short run be? Local "Korean" wars may continue indefinitely. The first frightful spasm of global war may resolve itself into an interminable war of the worlds. This is not a situation we can dispose of by dropping everything "for the duration" and picking up where we left off, as though we were knocking off for lunch. The only safe assumption is a long pull, and the only proper goal at the end of it is victory, not survival. We seek neither triumph nor conquest but a fulfillment of the moral purposes that moved us to make the effort in the first place. This must be a sustained effort. It cannot even begin if it counts the days and gambles on "the duration." The very nature of the effort places the highest premium we have ever placed upon our educational system. It rules out "education as usual," not for the reasons usually given but because education as usual is not good enough. It calls on us to educate not fewer citizens but more, not less well but better.

This is the greatest irony of all: that the circumstances calling for the greatest educational effort in our history should be so hostile to that effort. Just three years ago, President Truman's Commission on Higher Education, declaring that "the future of our civilization depends on the direction education takes, not just in the distant future, but in the days immediately ahead," fixed our goal at a college population of 4,600,000 by 1960. This would have meant 2,500,000 men and women enrolled in the thirteenth and fourteenth grades, 1,500,000 in the fifteenth and sixteenth, and 600,000 above the sixteenth. Based on an inventory of our needs, resources, and native ability as reflected in Army General Classification Tests, this figure was given as the minimum necessary to fulfill our social ideals and maintain our economic and cultural progress. In addition to this quantitative responsibility, the Commission charged our colleges and universities with qualitative improvements of all kinds, particularly those "which will make clear the ethical values and the concept of human relations upon which our political system rests."

The Report of the Commission makes wistful reading today. Out of a total college population of around 2,300,000, we now have about 1,500,000 men in our colleges and universities (grades thirteen through sixteen). Of these we expect to graduate approximately 380,000 this June. As these words are written, we are debating a military service law that would reduce the total male enrollment to 950,000 next year, 665,000 the year after, and 643,000 in 1954–1955. If the law should be enacted, our graduating classes would drop proportionately from 380,000 this year to 81,000 in 1955. If the ratio of college men to women that obtained in 1940 be applied to the Truman Commission's goal, it would give us a total male enrollment (grades thirteen through sixteen) in 1960 of 2,400,000. The total predicted for 1960 if the present bill is passed is 732,000. The needs of our society are to this measure as 24 is to 7.

In the long run, if this ratio is maintained, it means a staggering setback to our cultural development — to our arts, our sciences, and our polity. Among the tables published by the Truman Commission there is a column of figures entitled "Lost Leadership." The figures represent the men and women who have the capacity for higher education, and from whom our society urgently needs the benefits of higher education, yet who, for one reason or another, do not receive it. In 1947 the Commission put our wastage of these precious human resources at 2,383,000, a figure it expected to decline to 1,296,000 by 1960 if prevailing trends continued, and to zero, or thereabouts, if the Commission's recommendations were put into practice.

Think of the wastage if we pursue our present plans. And think of the consequences. We are not, at the moment, producing enough doctors for the armed forces or enough engineers for industry. Yet in Russia, if we can credit the evidence offered by the Director of the Office of Scientific Personnel of the National Research Council in his recent testimony to the Senate Subcommittee on Preparedness, medical, scientific, and technological institutes are full and their enrollment is increasing. The same is true of the Russian "pedagogical" institutions, where the Soviet version of knowledge is propounded. From 1943 to 1948 Russia is said to have graduated 150,000 engineers and 350,000 engineering assistants of the technical institute grade, and these numbers are on the increase; while our own estimated total for the next five years is only 118,000. Numbers deceive, and Russian statistics are unreliable. We have Allied engineers to swell our total, while Russia must provide for her satellites. Russia's "pedagogical" institutes can be outmatched by an honest — and a thriving — program of the liberal arts. An army which knows that its leaders dare to trust it with the truth holds an advantage for which no dialectical substitute has yet been found. But this is not the point. The point is that the Communist

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dictatorship, the military colossus now threatening to bestride the world, appears to be making use of higher education as a strategic asset, while the democratic leader of the free world does not.

3

What can be done to redress the balance in our favor? So many plans, involving such complicated arithmetic, have been proposed to Congress that it is impossible to predict which one, or which combination, will prevail. All fall and most of the winter these plans have kept our colleges in confusion and students in suspense. At the moment of writing, the debate between the advocates of an 18-year and a 19-year draft seems to be heading for the compromise of an 18½-year draft, a compromise that makes little sense save as a compromise.

As indicated by other nations' military service laws, it seems universally accepted that the best fighting years of a man's life come between the ages of 18 and 26; and, as indicated by the ages of our outstanding amateur and professional athletes, splitting the difference by six months one way or the other is specious. One thing seems certain. Before these words appear in print we shall have adopted a policy — whether Universal Military Service and Training, or a new application of Selective Service, or both — that will require some form of military duty of all young men; that will cause serious reductions in our college population for the next few years; and that will interrupt the normal process of higher education for an indefinite time to come. This is the prospect we must bank on and try to make the most of in the light of the emergency and in the light of the world we hope to live in when the emergency is over.

As to the first point, that all young men be held responsible for some form of military duty, there can be little argument. A policy that spells out this biological fact does no more than make specific and regular what has always been implicit. The Yale *News* has spoken forcefully on the subject. In a recent editorial it pointed out that "just about everybody" had testified at the UMST hearings "except the very people whose futures are being decided." As for the latter: —

> We would submit that the vast majority of 18-year-olds would answer more or less as follows: —
>
> 1. They are prepared to serve their country in the armed forces.
> 2. They can see no major importance in the age differential between men 18 and those 19.
> 3. They bitterly resent their mothers' pleas that they are too young to serve.
> 4. They would prefer to have it definite that they serve right after high school rather than go to college uncertain of their stay there.

The obligation of military service is accepted. The overwhelming desire of the men who will do the fighting is not deferment but a uniform policy on which they can all count and make plans.

But how and when shall that obligation be discharged? It is here that we run into the debate that has occupied so much of our educators' and military experts' time during the past few months. The debate has been at least temporarily resolved by the new law. But as long as our young men retain any freedom of choice as to when they will enter the armed forces — whether immediately upon completion of high school or later, after a year or two of college — and until we have repaired the deficits of educated manpower previously cited, we shall still face unfinished business and unanswered questions. We must answer these questions scrupulously from the standpoint of the national interest. What would be the purely educational consequences — to the students themselves and to their teachers — if everyone signed up for military service before entering college?

I can think of at least three good ones. First, it would promise us more mature students when they eventually entered college; and as every teacher knows, and our returning veterans proved, education is as much a process of maturation as it is of learning and instruction. Second, it would send us students free of indentures, able to lay their plans and choose their courses without the distraction of military or specialized training requirements. Third, after the initial two or three year gap had been closed, it would restore our student enrollment to its normal level. This last argument is the weakest because it assumes that as many men would enter college after military service as would have done so directly from high school. This assumption rests on two others: namely, that military circumstances will permit them to return, and that their desire to do so will not have diminished. Given a favorable military situation, a liberal plan of tuition scholarships, and our experience with the veterans of the last war, this whole set of assumptions is tenable.

Opposing precollege service are two serious considerations. The first is the interruption in the flow of doctors, engineers, and other scientific personnel, which many experts in these fields believe would be disastrous. This can be prevented by selecting students and assigning them to specialized college training after three or four months of basic military training. A more serious consideration is the maturity of high school graduates as compared with men who have completed at least one year of college. If the Cromwellian maxim is sound, the odds are in favor of the college men as against an army of schoolboys. The former should be a more stable, more resourceful, and more purposeful fighting force both in action and in training.

If the American high school took its students as far as its British or European counterparts, we might dismiss this consideration. But it does not.

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On the contrary, the graduate of a British public school or a French *lycée* is ready to enter our college sophomore year, and I have known some to enter our junior year. It may be that the intellectual apparatus of these young men — particularly the Europeans — has been developed beyond their years. Nevertheless, they have had better discipline and, by definition, more higher education than our high school graduates. The Russian military service law now in force defers high school students until they graduate or reach the age of 20 — the level of our college sophomores. The basic assumption underlying this whole discussion is that we are in for a long pull, in which we stand to win or lose, not only as soldiers but as representatives of a particular civilization. To send our young men abroad in either capacity before they fully comprehend that mission is to neglect one of the most essential phases of their training.

4

On the whole, with more than a million men becoming 18 each year, I think we can leave the choice of military service before or after entering college with those whose ages permit them to exercise it. Some will prefer to get it over with at once, others to take a year of college. The more freedom of choice we can preserve in these Spartan times the better. But we have no choice whatsoever in what we must do for these young men. Whether they are called at 18 or 18½ or 19, as high school graduates or as college freshmen, we must give them the richest educational experience of which we are capable before they go, and the greatest educational opportunities of which we are capable when they come back. Only thus can we put in the field an army that knows what it fights for and loves what it knows, the present soldiers and the future scholars.

This is the prime responsibility of American higher education in the emergency. Apart from preserving the higher learning that for two thousand years has instructed and illuminated Western civilization, apart from the scientific research that may hold our lives and our national security in the balance, alone and distinct and urgent, is the intellectual and spiritual fate of the men of fighting age today who will be tomorrow's philosophers and statesmen. They are our best hope of survival. What do we propose to do for them?

One of the first answers on everyone's lips is "acceleration." In the terms in which it is generally understood, I think this is a poor answer. These terms contemplate a round-the-clock, three-term cycle that crowds four normal academic years into less than three calendar years and keeps on revolving until the faculty collapses, the students revolt, or the emergency ends, with the odds favoring the demise of the faculty. Here we have another expression of our naïveté as to the nature and purpose of education. Our colleges and universities may be driven to accelerate by financial necessity, by the terms of our military service law, by ROTC contracts or some other *force majeure*. I do not know a single member of the teaching profession who has anything good to say for it on its merits. Our purpose is not to save our students from the draft, or salvage their tuitions, or get them as far as we can up the four-year ladder before they are called to duty. Our purpose is to give them a sense of what they are fighting for, a mature introduction to the higher learning of their civilization in the fullness of its humanistic wisdom and scientific genius, and a desire that will survive the drudgery of military service to come back and carry that civilization forward.

We cannot accomplish this purpose by accelerating. I think we would come nearer to it if we gave our students fewer courses and let them take their time with their studies. When I described acceleration recently to a distinguished French colleague, a member of the Collège de France whose ancestors have been teachers since the eighteenth century, he shook his head sadly and said: "Knowledge without culture. Knowledge without pleasure. Absorption without digestion." "Followed by regurgitation," I prompted. "I hope so," he replied; "that at least would show that the students were healthy." To keep our fields fertile we practice crop rotation. Shall we do less for our minds? To speed up our basic courses in the arts and sciences for this long-drawn time of trouble promises nothing but intellectual erosion and academic dust bowls. No one suggests that we take our summers off to loaf. Our faculties need them for the research and writing that sustains their teaching through the academic year. To our self-supporting students (a great majority in the nation) they are an economic necessity. Our ROTC units might use them to intensify both the course work and outdoor training which they have to conduct at a minimum during the academic year. Students deferred for specialized non-military training could make similar use of them. For these two groups, for students not yet called up, and ultimately for those returning from service, I would be willing to compromise on an eight-week summer term of intensive work in such subjects (for example, foreign languages or elementary mathematics) as lend themselves to intensive treatment and afford a contrast with the regular term's work. But as a matter of principle I would far rather award a B.A. degree for three rich, unhurried years than for four lean ones run off against a stop watch.

In the long run it may be necessary to shorten the time consumed in the eight grades of high school and college. If students have to budget two or more years to military service they may very well become impatient with the four-year college curriculum. I do not see why we should not make it

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possible for them to earn their B.A. degrees in three years, whether consecutive or interrupted by military service. But there is one fundamental condition precedent. To accomplish this purpose, without cheapening the B.A., means jacking up our standards of secondary education. We cannot give a three-year B.A. to students who are inadequately prepared for it. Even with the four-year degree, as every college admissions office knows, our secondary school performance is very uneven in this respect. At the best our secondary schools are as good as any in the world, and with a few curricular extensions and revisions could easily carry their students as far as any. At the worst their students are ill-prepared for a four-year B.A., and the worst greatly depresses the average. The result is that the best-trained students mark time as college freshmen while their less-favored classmates catch up, and they all enter sophomore year from scratch. To "accelerate" by eliminating this redundancy and waste motion would accomplish an educational reform long overdue in the United States. The emergency gives us a powerful incentive to attempt it.

The only reason why the "worst" American secondary schools should not be as good as the best is our indifference, our failure to comprehend the purpose of education. This is what tolerates the politics, incompetence, and miserably inadequate teachers' salaries that prolong the adolescence of the American youth and send him off to college with a child's mind in a man's body. Here is an area of "war effort" in which our colleges and universities could coöperate with our secondary schools to the mutual advantage of both and the incalculable advantage of the nation. Here, conceivably, is a mission for our college teachers temporarily unemployed by military service legislation. Matching grants of public and private funds in support of this mission, properly defined and administered, would be a direct investment in the future of our political institutions and our culture.

5

There are many things our colleges and universities might do to improve the educational advantages of the men going off to war and the opportunities awaiting them on their return. They could run pilot plants to test and perfect the curricula of our twelfth and thirteenth grades, an experiment that might offer immediate benefits to the students and colleges concerned and have far-reaching consequences for our entire educational system. It would almost surely reveal more effective methods of accelerating — that is, by eliminating waste and treating boys like men instead of men like boys — than trying to pour four quarts into a three-quart bottle. They, the colleges and universities — both on their own and in coöperation with the United States Armed Forces Institute — might offer extension courses for men on military service. This might have many advantages. It would keep track of students who had left after a year of college. It would help sustain their momentum. It might enable them to anticipate a course or two. At the very least it would offer an improvement on the Army's educational comics. Both projects — the pilot plants and the extension courses — would have the practical advantages of providing employment for the faculty and income for the college.

This is a time for self-inspection and self-improvement, for which opportunities exist on every campus. Far be it from me to say what others should do: I am too busy with the mote in my own eye. But I seem to see a country which wants better of its educational system, and deserves better of it, than it gets. Wherefore the discrepancy? Because, and here I return to my theme, we do not understand its purpose. We still think of it as a luxury and a privilege, when in reality it is a necessity and an obligation. We still (too often and too many of us) confuse it with other things, with politics, with business, with athletic sports. Once we see it clearly, how it all hangs together, from the primary school to the graduate school, and serves its purpose, in Jefferson's phrase, as "the most legitimate engine of government," I am convinced that we will speedily find ways for higher education to serve us in the emergency. We will find ways to rescue our colleges and universities from their financial difficulties and enlist them in the common cause. To doubt our ability to afford this is to doubt our reason. In 1947, the year of the Truman Commission's Report, we spent $1,005,000,000 on higher education in the United States. Last year we spent slightly over $1,000,000,000 on television sets. Five years ago nobody owned a television set. This is brand-new money, spent on a new toy, having nothing to do with the emergency, our security, or our survival, but only with our pleasure. It tends to prove — does it not? — that we can always find the money for what we want if we want it badly enough.

I would argue from this that we can easily afford to finance our mixed system of public and private higher education as an essential industry in the emergency and an essential key to the survival and progress of our civilization. But the will must precede the plans. That is why I would say to the planners and accelerators what Thoreau urged his preacher to say to his well-intentioned, nervous, action-starved, news-hungry neighbors: "Pause! Avast! Why so seeming fast, but deadly slow?"

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Outward bound for a year of teaching at a number of European universities, PERRY MILLER, *Professor of American Literature at Harvard University, encountered on the boat a novelist whose work he had been discussing for many years — Sinclair Lewis. Their friendship sparked on sight and they saw much of each other during the last year of Mr. Lewis's life. At Mr. Miller's request, Mr. Lewis lectured at the University of Leiden, and it is against this foreign background that Mr. Miller has drawn this clear, unforgettable portrait.*

THE INCORRUPTIBLE SINCLAIR LEWIS

by PERRY MILLER

1

THE first night out of New York on the *Nieuw Amsterdam,* September 7, 1949, my wife said, "That man going out of the bar looks like Sinclair Lewis." I caught a side glimpse — which I shall forever behold — of that long figure, its head tilted back, its narrow shoulders heightened and compressed, an elastic-jointed puppet held two inches off the deck by invisible strings, so that the longest pair of legs ever attached to so short a body jerked their way across the room in a motion that had nothing to do with the ordinary act of walking.

The obituaries, since his death on January 10, comment on the length of his legs and the convoluted patterns he made by intertwining them. Actually, he was not especially tall, and not preternaturally supple: it was the nervous compulsion inside the man that incessantly contorted his body as he talked or smoked or drank. It also sharpened his face and tormented his skin, drove him restless from place to place (made him hover, at last, over Italy like an exhausted hawk), gutted his loves and his friendships, kept him an obstinate adolescent at the same time that it wore him out; and finally it killed him.

I had the good fortune never to have met him before; hence we had never quarreled. When he had been working (if that is the word for what he did in preparation for the worst book he ever pieced together) upon *The God-Seeker,* he had wanted to consult an out-of-print work of mine on New England theology. I offered, through the bookseller, to send him my own copy; he found another somewhere, and never replied. Now I was to discover that this sort of thing Lewis did not forget. Of all the men I have ever known, his gratitude — for such a trifle — was the most profound and the most lasting. The point being that one thing really counted — his work. By which I mean that many observances which count much for other people, ruthlessly and magnificently and brutally did not figure for him. Or rather, he had so schooled himself to not letting them matter that even when he stooped to acknowledge them he just did not any longer know how to cope with them. He and I were friends within five minutes, because we did not have to explain anything.

It took no astuteness to realize that Sinclair Lewis was dying. He had barely recovered from a siege of pneumonia (on this voyage he was not drinking): his hand shook, and the wavering of his legs meant that he was unsteady on them. With him was his brother, Dr. Claude Lewis of Saint Cloud, Minnesota — of whom Red had not seen much in recent decades, who was six years older than he, and who addressed him, to my never ending astonishment, as "Hal." Dr. Lewis looked a good ten years younger: Red's myth — to which he clung with inexhaustible solicitude — was that he was about to introduce Claude for the first time to the immemorial riches of Europe. He asked my advice morning and evening as to just how gradually and circumspectly he should spring the art galleries and cathedrals on brother Claude, so as not to heap too much into the initiation.

The whole business was infinitely comic: Dr. Lewis is a distinguished surgeon, of eminent common sense, who can and does find his way about the world by his own native shrewdness. And when it comes to the conventional "sight-seeing," Red Lewis was about the most unperceptive and blundering of all the myriads of tourists this country annually exports. (He was as delighted as a boy with the tableau of the assassination of William the Silent in the Prinsenhof at Delft, and hung over the piece of the wall in which they have framed by glass the ricochet of the bullet, but the Grande Place of Brussels made him think only of Kansas City; he was never certain he was eating a good European

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meal unless he knew he was in the most expensive restaurant in the town.)

Still, all this was a clue: here was Sam Dodsworth casting himself, with outward bravado and considerable inward trepidation, as Virgil to a Dante who in fact was competently on his own. Sinclair Lewis was about to impart to his untraveled brother the immense stores of insight which to him, the much-traveled Odysseus, had become old stuff. One remembered the calculated brevity of the items Dodsworth finally enumerated as the sum total of what he was able to learn out of years of tourism.

I had easily assumed that Lewis made up Dodsworth's list by looking down from a vast familiarity with Europe, as a device in "character study." The creature, not the creator, had obviously acquired no more out of Europe than a knowledge of time-tables and the way to say "too much." My education took one vast stride forward when I discovered that the relation of this particular artist to that particular creation was not so disjunctive. It took another — a more tentative step — as I began to comprehend that nevertheless Dodsworth was not mere autobiography, not just an alias for Sinclair Lewis. It came momentarily to a dead halt when daily conversation (I pressed him unfairly) showed that if Dodsworth was in any sense Lewis himself, nevertheless the creator did know in what frame of reference he had set the man and that only thereafter had he become identified with the character. It took a final and immense leap when I realized that, although Lewis could not say it, and certainly would not, in the writing of that book, he had been (and still was) both in and out of it — not so much triumphantly as hopelessly. He had not mastered Dodsworth: he had presented him, and now was compelled to re-enact him.

I found that the secret was much the same when I got him onto *Main Street* and *Babbitt*. I then and there, with great relief, said good-by to the notion (which in the last weeks has been monotonously asserted in the obituaries) that Lewis was a "realist" and a "satirist." It does indeed become a curious comment on our age that lyrics and love songs which in any previous period would have been published frankly and freely as such, had to be composed, in our time, by this highly American artist under such elaborate disguises as his vast accumulation of the minutiae and the lingo of American life. What I have yet to learn — perhaps few of us yet understand or want to inquire too closely — is where did the love come from that could pour upon these things with a passion so concentrated that the only relief permitted it was to lash out against the very objects to which it was inescapably and irrevocably bound?

2

For the sake of the record, let me say that during Lewis's last year, I saw much of him — simply because I was in Europe and able to reach him. We perfected a little fiction between us that my wife and I, his newest friends, were his oldest and only friends. This gambit often grew rather harrowing as his perpetual mulling over the past disclosed the number of former friends who were now estranged, or at any rate out of touch. He received staggering quantities of mail, most of which (when he was with us) he never opened. In October he came to Holland and delivered a lecture at the University of Leiden. (Announced as an appearance for my class in American literature, it was attended by virtually the whole university, and had to be held in the great auditorium.) We drove him to Delft, Haarlem, and Alkmaar, to Antwerp and Brussels. We stayed with him in the spring at Florence, in the Villa di Costa with its vulgar spun-glass balustrades, and we last saw him at Zurich in August.

In December of 1949 he had found, in the Cook's Tourist Office at Florence, Alexander Manson, who became his secretary, chauffeur, nurse, and interpreter. I gather that Aleck and his lovely Tina were with him to the end. I knew that Lewis had tried this "secretary" arrangement before, and that it had ended in repeated disasters; but Aleck Manson is something special: he knows Europe completely, speaks the languages, can repair a car or order a dinner, tell a story or comprehend a picture, and both he and his wife devoted themselves to Lewis with a disregard of self that would take all the recent history of Europe to explain. The beauty and poignance of the story is that Aleck instantly knew, and never for a moment imagined anything else, what Lewis signified as an artist. I am a countryman of Sinclair Lewis, as Aleck is not; and I grew up with his novels a part — a very great part — of my experience; most of those who read this did likewise. It took me all these years, and then the illumination of his discourse, and after that Aleck's by no means blind consecration, to realize what a terrifying thing it is to be in at the death of a lion. I use the word lion not in the flip sense of a target for hostesses: I mean it in the primitive sense of a leonine beast who roars his last defiance from a cave in the rocks.

You may think that this is melodramatic overstatement as against some of the facts. Externally they are shabby enough. During the winter, while he worked on the novel which will be published this spring, he managed — with Aleck's help — to keep away from the bottle. As soon as he finished the manuscript, he started drinking, until his Florentine physician forbade him spirits. When I reached him in April, he was guzzling quantities of red wine, and despite Aleck's strenuous efforts, he generally succeeded in knocking himself out by afternoon. At a Florence restaurant he commanded the orchestra to play the sentimental tunes of his earlier escapades; he peeled off and flung about five-thousand-lira notes — Babbitt on a spree — until

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Aleck could get him out and pour him into the car. By August he was drinking only beer, but he had already had two serious heart attacks and should not have touched even that.

I suppose hundreds of people in three decades have seen Sinclair Lewis drunk; no doubt he made a vast public spectacle of himself. I cannot say what kept him going through the years of creativity; I do know that at the end of it, his back to the wall, facing himself drunk or sober, he did not flinch. There was something positively reckless about it. He was not drinking because he was miserable and wanted solace; neither was he what you would call a drunkard. He was no disenchanted, alcoholic Scott Fitzgerald, drinking compulsively. There may not have been much joy in what Red was doing, but there was still plenty of defiance. Remember, this was not Walter Scott collecting his retainers about him in feudal glory; this was not Zola declining in the realization of an enshrined place in the Academy. This was just an American who had written himself out, to whom the Nobel Prize was no canonization but merely one of those things that happen, for whom the dignity of the artist had no external supports, and who yet somehow maintained it, as Poe and Whitman did, on the terms which this nation imposes upon its artists — terms that Lewis gladly, as a matter of fact, imposed upon himself for fear he might otherwise take himself too solemnly.

This was something that ran deep and strong in him — his hatred for pomposity. I don't mean his treasuring the hypocrisies of Main Street or the sanctimoniousness of Elmer Gantry: that was something else entirely. I mean his attitude toward himself as a writer and toward writing in general. It was too serious a business to be taken solemnly. In the last months he had a game he would play with Aleck — it went on interminably — in which he was the stuffy, grandiose German Professor and Aleck was the trembling *Privatdocent;* the point of the game (aside from letting Lewis show off his German, for he was vain about his smattering of languages) was that the Herr Professor Dr. Geheimrat made a damn fool of himself. It was a way of throwing bricks at high silk hats. It was a Mark Twain gesture, it was deeply and embarrassingly American, but it was also more: it was a myth-maker thumbing his nose at those who would reduce myth to literalness.

3

Being a professor of literary history, I wanted to find out what he derived from. The answer was instructive: Dickens. He knew Dickens by heart. There was little to be gained by asking him about what had come in between, about realists and naturalists. He had read here and there, but most of them meant little to him, except for Shaw and Wells, who to him were primarily writers that showed what might be done with Dickensian exaggeration in a modern situation. The most valuable and most plausible thing in his account of his own beginnings (you must understand that I seldom asked him a point-blank question) was the perfect naturalness and inevitability with which, it had seemed to him, a young writer of about 1910, with Dickens as a model, would proceed to make social comedy out of America.

Yes, he recognized that by now the generation of the twenties, himself the foremost, were being defined in historical terms and treated as radical departures, as collectively a great break with the past. He had no such sense of the story at all; as for most of the "influences" which, according to our historians, brought about the revolution, he was unaware of them or else heard about them only after their effect on his own work had been detected by some ingenious critic. He would agree that up to a point it had been a matter of the time and place; as he talked about the coming of the deep-freeze, television, and the high-powered automobile to Gopher Prairie, he saw that he had caught Main Street just at the turning point, at a now vanished point, and that his book was already a matter of history — and then he would take flight into fantasy, showing that he had never been and could never be capable of thinking in terms of history. He was in love with mythological and typological creations like Micawber and Gradgrind, and all his effort had been to evoke such genii out of the American bottle. It was a constricted and stoppered vessel he had — as he saw it — to work with, which is one reason he vented so much rage upon it. His incantations had to be more labored than those of Dickens, who was in a position to summon up, with a wave of the hand so to speak, a Pecksniff or a Mr. Squeers. In America there had to be a vaster quantity of documented fact before Lewis could extract from it a Babbitt or a Gantry, just as there had to be all the knowledge of the River before Mark Twain could set Huck Finn afloat upon it.

Lewis listened to, and sometimes was impressed by, what the critics said of his books as providing a panorama of the civilization, but for him Babbitt and Gantry and Arrowsmith were creations; he was still trying the old art when he wrote such pathetically documented things as *The Prodigal Parents* or *Cass Timberlane.* He was still trying it even last winter, and told me with affected complacence, as though one should say that Winston Churchill had dropped in yesterday, that in the new book Mr. and Mrs. Dodsworth had reappeared.

In this view — I believe I am not overstressing it — the lecture he gave for my class at Leiden was immensely revealing: most of the students were bewildered, because it was not anything they expected or wanted Sinclair Lewis to say. He worked on it carefully, and his notes reside now in the Uni-

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versity Library. It was his last effort at any such sustained discourse — in Florence he made one or two perfunctory appearances on platforms, when it took all of Aleck's immense diplomacy to keep him from attempting to deliver an address in Italian! At Leiden his argument was that America is not new, it is actually very old. He proved this first by dwelling on the antiquity of the Indian culture; how that was linked to the present American civilization so as to furnish us with its venerability never became quite clear. Secondly, he insisted, Americans all brought with them the civilization of Europe, and consequently their culture is as old as any European. He then blamed the Europeans for the antics of the Americans: because they expect us to act like wild Indians, we are obliged to put on a show for them. If you listen to the second half of a sentence uttered by the visiting American, he said, it will be a logical, sensible statement, but the first half will contain some "Oh boy" or "Gee whiz" or "What the hell" — to assist the European in keeping up his illusion.

This from the author of *Babbitt!* If I was amused, my students were puzzled, because the primary (and almost the only) assumption among literate Europeans is that the recent literature of America is a sociological report on the horrors of a materialistic order, that all our artists hate it and want, like Lewis, to escape to Europe. In part, Lewis's speech was sheer perversity: he got fun out of scandalizing the European stereotype. He, like all of us, was troubled over the charge that the American literature of protest, with himself as Exhibit A, was confirming Europeans in their anti-Americanism. But there was something else at work in him when he wrote this lecture, which I think is fundamental in his best work.

I stumbled upon it early in our friendship by telling him that as a boy in Chicago I had wanted to devote myself to the ancient history of the Near East. Nothing I ever said to him made his eyes shine so much. He too had wanted, more than anything in the world, to be an Egyptologist. Don't ask me if this is true (although Claude did remember that the boy Hal had spouted a lot about Babylonia): my point is only that he announced this to have been the great dream of his youth, and swore that it was the adventure yet to come. While his strength was visibly failing, even after the heart attacks commenced, he descanted on how he and Aleck were to set out in the fall, work their way through Sicily, then go to Egypt and Damascus and Assyria, and at last penetrate to Persepolis. I do not know how much history he read, but he loved to pontificate about Rameses II and the queen of Palmyra.

Was it a trauma of escapism? Maybe. In ordinary terms, I think it was something simpler: it was a thin little boy in Sauk Center dreaming (over an unfinished book) about the gorgeous panoply of Ashur-bani-pal. Remember how many times the majestic syllables of ancient history are invoked in his ironic addresses to America, how "Ur of the Chaldees" had for him a magic sound, and how it seemed the supreme comment upon the tin Lizzie standing before the Bon Ton store that for this the pyramids were built and Hannibal crossed the Alps.

I said good-by to him one night in Zurich; Aleck was taking him the next day to Turin, and he and I knew that we would never meet again. The next morning, before breakfast, he telephoned: he wanted me to tell him whether Rangoon is a port for ocean-going vessels and the precise dates when Generals Lee and Grant died.

4

I SUPPOSE he knew that he would never get to Egypt. He probably would have been as restless before the pyramids as he was in the cathedral of Antwerp, and would have distracted his attention from the sublimity of the pile by finding some ridiculous detail off to one side, or by looking at his watch and worrying about whether he could get back to the hotel on time. But that is not what concerns us. One of the most perceptive of my friends in Leiden came from his lecture exhilarated; when I asked her what she liked about it, she replied with unhesitating emphasis, "His fanaticism." That, she said, is what Europe needs, and she went on to contrast him and Dodsworth with Henry James: where James made so exquisite an effort to comprehend the special essence of every European place, to stretch his sensibility into the fine web that would catch the slightest reverberations, Lewis (like Dodsworth) stood intransigent and incorruptible. For this listener, and several others, his lecture had not been what he may consciously have intended it, the rebuttal of a flimsy European stereotype about America; it was much more: it was a revelation of the sources of his energy as an artist, of the act of dedication he had performed so thoroughly that he could never, whether flamboyant or, as now, sick and battered, do anything but exemplify it. My friend said that she was reading *Babbitt* with new eyes.

The difficulty is that too few in America have read him with such eyes. Perhaps I might put my contention more bluntly (although it loses much if stated so flatly): it is all very well to call Lewis a realist because he heaped up the furnishings of the Kennicotts' parlor or because he could mimic to the last grammatical atrocity the jabberings of the man who knew Coolidge, but at the heart of him Lewis was what we must call, for lack of a better word, a romancer. He loved telling stories, and even in this last year, in the ebb of his powers, could start with almost anything and make the draft of a novel out of it. I have never heard anything so fascinating, and it made the Dickens clue trebly revelatory.

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Lewis could have earned a comfortable living writing stories for magazines; in fact, before *Main Street* he was doing exactly that. He might well have become another Hervey Allen or a Kenneth Roberts. What kept him from being just a spinner of yarns was not something more sophisticated in him — not any doctrinal adherence to, or even comprehension of, the tenets of realism or naturalism — but something more primitive. The scrupulous documentation was the working of a conscience. This organ does not operate so strenuously in easy living or in facile writing; it becomes tormenting only when there is some deep psychic dislocation, some wrong done — or some hurt felt.

5

I GATHER that few of Red's friends got along with him for any period without certain stormy scenes. I had mine the night before his lecture, when we were invited for dinner by the Rector Magnificus of Leiden University. Professor van Groningen is a civilized, gentle classicist; his wife is witty and, fortunately, comprehends the world. They both had behaved with quiet heroism in the war, and are what in Holland is known as "conservative" on the Indonesian question (which means that they regret the American policy), but I never had any difficulty discussing it with them.

This night, I started the dinner off by remarking that the Amsterdam paper had called Claude the younger brother. (There is no way I can tell this story that reflects the slightest credit on me.) At the table, the van Groningens intimated their attitude toward Indonesia, whereupon Red launched into a patriotic tirade, of the sort he had voluminously burlesqued, in which the embattled Indonesians became American patriots at Valley Forge and his Dutch hosts supercilious Tories in London of 1776. I completed the ruin of the evening by asking the Rector to have Dr. Lewis escorted through the Faculty of Medicine on the morrow, managing by an inspiration of stupidity to say that Claude had heard his brother before and did not need to hear him again. The resulting scene was Red Lewis at his most histrionic: we were all denounced and assured that the lecture would never be delivered. The situation was saved only by the wit of Mevrouw van Groningen, who told funny stories, mostly at her own expense, while Lewis sulked like a child, until he came out of it, put his hand on my arm, and said of his hostess, "Wouldn't Frans Hals have liked to paint her!"

Somehow, my wife and I got them back to the hotel. Claude pulled me aside and whispered as he went up to bed, "He's been like that since he was a boy."

Lewis was contrite, but of course wouldn't admit it; he took us into the bar, and then the confession came. It's been that way from the beginning, he said. I wanted to write, and I've worked like hell at it, and the whole of Sauk Center and my family and America have never understood that it is work, that I haven't just been playing around, that this is every bit as serious a proposition as Claude's hospital. When you said that Claude did not want to hear my lecture, Lewis told me, you set up all the resentments I have had ever since I can remember.

If much of this sounds petulant, it was. It was also the story of the artist in America. It was a revelation of the sources of what the perceptive Dutch woman found his redeeming fanaticism. It may have been bad manners but it was freedom, passionate and consuming. It was the *élan* that went into the writing of the great novels of the twenties, which makes them, in the guise of ferocious attacks upon America, celebrations of it. For at the end of the lecture on the next day, he said something which I believe he seldom brought himself to avow, which certainly he never put in print: "I wrote *Babbitt* not out of hatred for him but out of love."

Schlegel's Julius once said to his Lucinda that man is a serious animal and that we must attack this abominable propensity from all sides. "To that end ambiguities are also good, except that they are so seldom ambiguous. When they are not and allow only one interpretation, that is not immoral, it is only obtrusive and vulgar." I am afraid that in the books of his later years Sinclair Lewis wrote much that allows only one interpretation. All this immense America had to be poured through him; there was too much of it, and finally he took merely to reporting it, as Whitman, when his vitality flagged, catalogued it. But Lewis never got altogether away from the ambiguity that informs his five triumphs of the 1920s.

Over and over again, after he had mailed the manuscript of this last book, when he would try to enjoy Italian scenery or the Swiss Alps, he would come back, with the reiteration of obsession, to asserting that he had written twenty-three novels about America, that nobody could ask more of him, that he had done his duty by his country. "I love America," he would shout into the unoffending European atmosphere; "I love it, but I don't like it." As a closing statement on the career of Sinclair Lewis, this assuredly does not, whatever else you say about it, allow of only a single, and certainly not of a literal. interpretation.

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Sacrilege

To what extent shall books, plays, and films be restricted in this country by what one or another religious group believes to be sacrilegious? The question has been posed directly by the recent efforts of Catholic authorities in New York City to cause the withdrawal of an Italian film and to achieve a boycott of the theatre which, under a court injunction, persisted in showing it. BOSLEY CROWTHER, *screen editor and critic of the New York* Times *since 1940 and a past chairman of the New York Film Critics, reports on a case which sets an important precedent involving censorship for theological reasons.*

THE STRANGE CASE OF "THE MIRACLE"

by BOSLEY CROWTHER

I

IF IT weren't that it actually has happened — if it weren't for the record of events by which the Italian film, *The Miracle*, has been hamstrung and harassed in New York — it would be hard to believe that such oppression could occur in this country at this time, especially in a great enlightened city and over a minor piece of motion picture art. Yet the case of *The Miracle* has snowballed amid the tensions of recent months as an unmistakable demonstration of the vehemence of a campaign waged by powerful elements of the Catholic Church to restrain the subject matter of films shown in this country.

That observation is not impulsive. Neither is the campaign. The Catholic Church has been putting moral pressure upon our movies for many years, often with the full support and blessing of non-Catholic religious and social groups. And in large and important areas of production and exhibition of films it has generally succeeded in achieving adherence to its dictates and desires. In fact, it has brought its moral influence to bear so firmly upon Hollywood, theatres, censor boards, and citizen watch-groups, that one wonders at this sudden bold barrage against one small Italian film.

Why should a foreign-language picture, being shown in a chic art theatre in New York to an obviously intellectual audience of mature sensibilities and tastes, be made a target for the bludgeoning of the License Commissioner of New York? Why should a fragmentary picture, less than forty minutes in length, having to do with the pitiful aberrations of a poor Italian peasant woman's faith, call forth from New York's Cardinal Spellman a denunciation of extraordinary heat and induce mass demonstrations by Catholic lay groups? And why should the challengeable structure of movie censorship in New York State — and, indeed, in our democratic system — be exposed to scrutiny because of this one film?

The answers to these questions are not satisfactorily revealed in the Catholic condemnation of the picture as "blasphemy" and "sacrilege." There have been other motion pictures which the Catholic Church has decreed of a sacrilegious nature, yet the lid wasn't blown off over them. Neither is it realistic to assume that *The Miracle* affair has been a spontaneous uprising to compel the suppression of one film. While there is no positive evidence that all the strange occurrences in the case were engineered in a predetermined pattern, the facts clearly indicate that *The Miracle* became the recognized issue for a calculated showdown test of strength.

To understand it fully, it is necessary to keep in mind that the Catholic Church, through its Legion of Decency, established in 1933, has been the most forceful and consistent arbitrator of the "morals" of films in this land. It keeps a watchful eye on film production — and, indeed, the Production Code, by which Hollywood censors its own product before it goes out, was largely authored by a Catholic priest. Through its weekly grading of pictures, the Legion has a powerful device of consumer influence. And, of course, in those larger communities where the Catholic Church has considerable strength and voice, the Legion is able to impress its wishes upon theatre managers through personal channels. In short, the authority of the Legion is so broadly and firmly applied that American producers and exhibitors generally accede to it, rather than run the risk of strife and boycotts.

There is one area, however, in which the Legion has not yet imposed its will. That is the marginal area of foreign-language films. The reasons for this are simple. The producers of these films, particularly the French and the Italians, are not conditioned to our rigidly charted morals, even though the Motion Picture Association has earnestly tried to indoctrinate them in the philosophy and the rulings of our Production Code.

Further, most foreign film production is on a basis of individual enterprise, with the artists choosing

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their own subjects and making them as they wish. Since the interests and ideas of foreign artists are often original and bold, the consequence is that they turn out pictures of occasional incisiveness and power which look at life in its rawness and reality, without disguise. Such films have proved eminently attractive to limited segments of the American audience, so naturally a considerable commerce in them has evolved. By the time they have run the gantlet of the Customs Office and the New York State censors, they have been pretty well pruned of "obscenity" and "indecency" in concrete forms. But, of course, there are often in these pictures both subjects and attitudes which are not in accord with the Legion's philosophy of entertainment or code of morals, and many of them have been condemned or rated low by the Legion.

The Miracle was not challenged by the New York State censor board, which passed it on two occasions prior to its opening in New York. It was first passed without English titles early in 1949 and again, with English titles, when it had been assembled as one of three parts of a film called *Ways of Love*, which Joseph Burstyn, an American importer, arranged for distribution here. The other two parts of *Ways of Love* are Jean Renoir's *A Day in the Country* and Marcel Pagnol's *Jofroi*.

Perhaps it would be misleading to attach much importance to the fact that *The Miracle* was produced and directed by Roberto Rossellini, the man who, prior to this, had done *Open City* and *Paisan*, two distinguished post-war Italian pictures, and who made himself rather conspicuous in the American eye two years ago when he wooed and won Ingrid Bergman, first as his acknowledged mistress and then as his bride. Resentment against Rossellini no doubt contributed to this case, as Cardinal Spellman himself indicated in his public denouncement of the film, when he gratuitously observed that "the picture should very properly be entitled, 'Woman Further Defamed,' by Roberto Rossellini." But it was incidental, at best.

The most logical assumption, on the face of the evidence, is that *The Miracle* became an issue after it opened in New York, and that the Catholic artillery was assembled in mounting arrays as it was seen that the distributor and the theatre were far from minded to heed the special objections of the Church. The steps in the campaign and their nature have an ominous significance of their own, but first let us get some things in order, including the literal contents of the film.

2

The Miracle opened at the Paris Theatre, uneventfully, on December 12. The press reaction to the omnibus program, *Ways of Love*, was generally enthusiastic, with response to *The Miracle* considerably "mixed," as the saying goes. Some of the newspaper critics frankly felt it to be "sacrilegious" and "distasteful"; others, while noting that it might be offensive to the scrupulously religious, felt that it had compassion and basic faith. A sense of beauty and uplift was indicated by a few. Unfortunately, the digests of the story which were given in the reviews — and later in many publications — trimmed it to such bare details that a sadly misleading comprehension of the contents was imparted by them. And thus those who haven't seen the picture and haven't had a chance to judge for themselves are likely to have peculiar notions about it, which the heated controversy hasn't helped.

This is the story of *The Miracle*, stated without prejudice: —

A poor, simple-minded girl is tending a herd of goats on a mountainside one day, when a bearded stranger passes. Suddenly it strikes her fancy that he is St. Joseph, her favorite saint, and that he has come to take her to heaven, where she will be happy and free. While she pleads with him to transport her, the stranger gently plies the girl with wine, and when she is in a state of tumult, he apparently ravishes her. (This incident in the story is only briefly and discreetly implied.)

The girl awakens later, finds the stranger gone, and climbs down from the mountain not knowing whether he was real or a dream. She meets an old priest who tells her that it is quite possible that she did see a saint, but a younger priest scoffs at the notion. "Materialist!" the old priest says.

There follows now a brief sequence — intended to be symbolic, obviously — in which the girl is reverently sitting with other villagers in church. Moved by a whim of appetite, she snitches an apple from the basket of a woman next to her. When she leaves the church, a cackling beggar tries to make her share the apple with him, but she chases him away as by habit and munches the fruit contentedly.

Then, one day, while tending the village youngsters as their mothers work at the vines, the girl faints and the women discover that she is going to have a child. Frightened and bewildered, she suddenly murmurs, "It is the grace of God!" and she runs to the church in great excitement, looks for the statue of St. Joseph, and then prostrates herself on the floor.

Thereafter she meekly refuses to do any menial work and the housewives humor her gently but the young people are not so kind. In a scene of brutal torment, they first flatter and laughingly mock her, then they cruelly shove and hit her and clamp a basin as a halo on her head. Even abused by the beggars, the poor girl gathers together her pitiful rags and sadly departs from the village to live alone in a cave.

When she feels her time coming upon her, she starts back towards the village. But then she sees the crowds in the streets; dark memories haunt her; so she turns towards a church on a high hill and in-

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stinctively struggles towards it, crying desperately to God. A goat is her sole companion. She drinks water dripping from a rock. And when she comes to the church and finds the door locked, the goat attracts her to a small side door. Inside the church, the poor girl braces herself for her labor pains. There is a dissolve, and when we next see her sad face, in close-up, it is full of a tender light. There is the cry of an unseen baby. The girl reaches towards it and murmurs, "My son! My love! My flesh!"

That is Rossellini's *The Miracle*, and, without comment upon the drama itself, we might say that Anna Magnani, the famous actress, gives a tour-de-force performance in the principal role. In explaining the film to Cardinal Spellman in a letter, Rossellini said he wanted to show that "men are still without pity because they still have not gone back to God."

3

An estimation of the whole program of *Ways of Love* was published by the Legion of Decency twelve days after its opening in New York. This estimation condemned it as "a sacrilegious and blasphemous mockery of Christian and religious truth." And with that the assaults upon the picture publicly began.

The first blow came from a quarter whence it was least expected to come, and it came on the day preceding the publication of the Legion's report. New York's License Commissioner, Edward T. McCaffrey, informed the management of the Paris Theatre that he found *The Miracle* "officially and personally blasphemous" and ordered it removed from the screen on penalty of having the license of the theatre revoked. The next day, the Saturday before Christmas, the theatre complied. It is interesting to note that McCaffrey said that he was acting personally because he "felt that there were hundreds of thousands of citizens whose religious beliefs were assailed by the picture." McCaffrey is associated with the Democratic political machine in Bronx County, New York, and is a former State Commander of the Catholic War Veterans.

Immediately, outraged citizens protested this action against the film, and Joseph Burstyn, the picture's distributor, took the case to court, challenging the right of the License Commissioner to revoke a theatre license for such a cause. Two weeks later, he obtained an injunction from Supreme Court Justice Aron Steuer, who ruled that the License Commissioner or any other city official has no right to prevent the showing of a film which has already received a license from the State censor board. This ruling has been appealed by the city. *The Miracle* went back on the screen, after being forced off during the period of the Christmas holidays.

Two days after the Justice's ruling, however, the second and major blow fell. On Sunday, January 7, there was read at all Masses in St. Patrick's Cathedral a statement from Cardinal Spellman calling upon the devout not only of the New York Archdiocese but in all the United States to stay away from *The Miracle* or any theatre showing it. The Cardinal stated that the picture "blasphemously and sacrilegiously implies a subversion to the very inspired word of God" and that, secondarily, it is "a vicious insult to Italian womanhood."

With that command to boycott, the Cardinal directly conveyed what has usually been the most effective weapon in the Church's arsenal to compel theatre operators to accept the Legion's decrees. In November, 1947, for instance, Cardinal Dougherty of Philadelphia instructed all Catholics in his diocese not to patronize the Fox Theatre there because it was showing *Forever Amber*, which the Legion had condemned. Cardinal Spellman also issued a warning at that time against the film. Shortly after, the producers of the picture cut it and changed it sufficiently to relieve it of the Legion's condemnation and the boycott and threats were withdrawn.

On the Sunday afternoon that Cardinal Spellman called for a boycott of *The Miracle*, a delegation of pickets representing the Catholic War Veterans and other organizations of Catholic men began to march in front of the Paris Theatre. And every evening thereafter, at 6 P.M., the pickets showed up in front of the theatre bearing placards which said such things as "This Picture Is an Insult to Every Decent Woman and Her Mother" and "This Picture Is Blasphemous."

It must be said, incidentally, that the characteristics and circumstances of this picket line were among the most distasteful and disturbing aspects of the case. An ugly and fanatic spirit was often apparent among the marching men as they shouted in the faces of people lined up to buy tickets, "Don't enter that cesspool!" and "Don't look at that filth!" A grim sort of jingoism was also confused in their cries, "This is a Communist picture!" and "Buy American!"

And then another thing happened. On a busy Saturday night, January 20, the theatre received an anonymous telephone call threatening a bombing of the theatre. The police were notified and a few minutes later a detail entered and ordered the theatre cleared. The audience was turned out, the house was inspected, and a half hour later the audience was allowed to return, with some natural confusion occurring among the customers. At this point, Fire Lieutenant Edward Coughlan served a summons on the house manager, charging him with permitting people to stand in the aisles and in the back. This was the first time the theatre had ever been charged with an offense of fire regulations.

The following Saturday night, a police detail again emptied the theatre. This time, the police said, somebody had called the department reporting that "two men had been overheard talking in a bar" about throwing a bomb at the theatre.

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Meanwhile, a side development was occurring in the case. On December 27, four days after the McCaffrey ban but before any other developments, the New York Film Critics, composed of the film reviewers of the New York daily papers, voted *Ways of Love* the best foreign-language picture of the year and prepared to give it an award, along with awards to other selections, in a ceremony on January 28 at the Radio City Music Hall.

But on January 19 the management of this theatre received a call from Martin Quigley, a film trade paper publisher and an influential lay Catholic, who advised — "as a friend," he said later — that the theatre might be subject to boycott if it permitted its stage to be used for the presentation of an award to *Ways of Love*. Mr. Quigley, it should be added, is well known as a spokesman for the Church and for the Legion of Decency in the film industry. He was also one of the framers, along with Father Daniel A. Lord, of the industry Production Code. His advice caused the Music Hall anxiety. And when the Catholic Chancellery in New York let it be understood, in response to inquiries, that such a ceremony would incur the disfavor of the Church and of the Cardinal, the Critics voluntarily withdrew from the Music Hall and gave their awards elsewhere. They chose not to embarrass their hosts.

Withal, it was notable that attendance at the Paris did not decline during the picketing and demonstrations at the theatre. Indeed, the excitement seemed to draw customers — and many were obviously attracted who would not have seen the picture otherwise. Full houses throughout the picketing were the tokens of public curiosity. After three weeks, the picketing was voluntarily stopped.

4

Operations were launched on yet another level to seek a revocation of the license of the film. In New York State, the censors, who pass upon and license the films that may be shown, are a division of the State Education Department, of which the Board of Regents is the top directorate. On January 19 the Regents made it known that they had received "hundreds" of protests against the picture and, in an unprecedented move, they ordered the distributor, Mr. Burstyn, to show cause why the film's license should not be revoked.

Burstyn's lawyers took the position that the Regents are not empowered to revoke the license of a film, once it is granted by the censor board, unless some act is committed which violates the license itself. They refrained from participating in a hearing. Whereupon the Regents viewed the film in a body on February 15, agreed unanimously that it is "sacrilegious," and revoked its license the following day. *The Miracle* was again removed from the program at the Paris, and Burstyn's lawyers went to the Appellate Division of the New York courts, precipitating what will probably be a lengthy litigation over the film.

It was significant that Cardinal Spellman, in his denunciation of *The Miracle*, proclaimed, "If the present law is so weak and inadequate to cope with this desperate situation, then all right-thinking citizens should unite to change and strengthen the Federal and State statutes so as to make it impossible for anyone to profit financially by blasphemy, immorality and sacrilege." And right after the reading of the Cardinal's statement, the auxiliary bishop of St. Patrick's Cathedral said that the Catholic Welfare Conference of the State of New York would ask the Legislature to "strengthen" the State censorship laws.

If, in fact, the issue is brought to a legislative stage — or if the whole question of censorship is opened up in the courts — then will come an opportunity for interested parties to inquire why there should be any authority for the practice of censorship on the grounds of sacrilege. Already many Protestant ministers and Jewish rabbis, educators, and civil-rights groups have challenged the moves to suppress *The Miracle* because it is said to violate the religious standards of one group.

Allen Tate, poet and critic — and a Catholic himself — put the matter crisply in a letter to the New York *Times:* —

"The charge against *The Miracle* is sacrilege, a theological category different in kind from that of public morals or public decency. The question then arises: Is there any institution in the United States, civil or religious, which has the legitimate authority to suppress books and motion pictures, however disagreeable they may be to certain persons on theological grounds? In my opinion, there is no such institution under a system that separates church and state."

The anomaly of divided opinion among Catholics themselves as to how much sacrilege or blasphemy there is in *The Miracle* has, in fact, forcefully appeared, both in this country and in Italy, only making more pointed the peril of permitting anyone the authority of determining a matter of this sort. When *The Miracle* opened in Italy, it was condemned by Catholics of the so-called "rigorous" group, as well as by the Italian counterpart of the Legion of Decency, but it was ardently admired and supported by Catholics of the so-called "lax" group. Oddly enough, the film was allowed to show in Italy without any repressive maneuvers on the part of the Vatican — which conspicuously presents the anomaly of its being tolerated in a Catholic land and repressed in a sovereign state of this country where freedom of religious thought is a postulate.

This thought leads directly to a question as to how much protection from possible hurt by motion pictures should be afforded by censorship to minority groups. This has come up in discussion of *The Miracle* case, with reference made, incidentally, to

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the case of the British film, *Oliver Twist.* This film, though passed by the New York censors, has been withheld from release in this country for more than a year because of the objections of certain Jewish groups which maintain that the characterization of Fagin might cause prejudice against Jews.

In this cause there is apparently no workable basis for official censorship, let alone legal justification. It has been widely remarked that if solicitude for the sensibilities of all minority groups were insisted upon, the only person you could offend with impunity, because he would have no minority protection, would be the white Protestant, native-born!

Obviously the emotion that has been roused by *The Miracle* case has only increased the confusion in the public mind about film censorship. And the difference between legitimate Catholic protests and the forceful methods which certain Catholics have employed to obtain restraint has been neglected in the thinking of many who hold to the highest American ideals.

This points the ultimate question which may remotely be settled by this case: How legitimate, actually, is film censorship in the United States? For, oddly enough, the extension of the First Amendment of the Constitution to cover the screen has not been requested and tested in the Supreme Court in recent years. While our American film industry has justifiably boasted of the growth in the artistry and cultural stature of motion pictures, it has somehow neglected to request the same freedom for its medium that is enjoyed by the over-all press.

It would be an irony, indeed, if the freedom of the American screen should be accomplished on the issue of a foreign film called *The Miracle.*

CANTICLE

To E.S.

by ELIZABETH CHESLEY

YOUR words are beautiful, beautiful
like a languorous snowfall
muffling the heart's low beat
with their murmurous slow sweet
chronicle.

They are jewel clear
as heart of glacier
or the garnet pear
on Aladdin's magic tree
that so sparkled, he
rubbed his dark eyes, there
in the robber's shadowy lair.

They are sweet, sweet
like the marguerite
in her snow of petals strewn
in a sweet dissolving swoon, —
essence of all afternoon.

And they whisper on and on
like the ocean's swell
bound in iridescent shell.

Beautiful, beautiful,
like diatom's drifting fall,
sifting down the ocean's deep.
Like the treasures dreamers keep
hidden in the caves of sleep.

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Professor of Government at Harvard University, CARL J. FRIEDRICH *was governmental adviser to General Clay during the early years of the Army of Occupation, and last summer he spent two months at the University of Heidelberg lecturing on political science and the problems of democracy. His classes were more than half composed of veterans of the Wehrmacht, and in the informal discussions outside the classroom, this is what they told him.*

WHY THE GERMANS HESITATE

by CARL J. FRIEDRICH

THE opposition to rearmament among Germans is one of the puzzles of the present situation. It has excited much comment and interest recently, though at first many observers were incredulous because it ran so much counter to established views and set opinions. When I taught at Heidelberg University last summer, the issue was a constant topic of discussion and often violent argument among the students. Time and again we would get into it, inside class and out. Vividly I recall sitting by the river once, with a group of students, while the ruins of the castle greeted us from the hillside.

"Would you serve in a German army, voluntarily or as a draftee, if the call came?" I asked a law student, about twenty-five, who looked like the perfect noncom.

"No, sir, I have had enough." About eight others nodded assent. The tenth fellow, younger than the others, said: "I would, as a volunteer, if we were treated the way the American army is."

"Oh sure," another said, "but we never would be. Besides, I have had three years as a Russian prisoner of war and that is all I want." Since I looked puzzled, he went on: "You must understand, Herr Professor, that five years in the army and three years as a prisoner is a long time. The longer it lasted, the less we knew why it should go on. And I tell you another thing: there is nothing more awful than to be out on the front, waiting for mail from home, and then hearing that your home town has been bombed. I don't want to be in that situation again, ever. When I came home for one of my leaves, I went straight to where we lived — I wanted to surprise them — and what did I find when I got there? Ruins. My mother, my sister, dead. More of that? No, thank you."

"But," I remarked, "surely there would be a difference if you were defending your country against a Russian invasion."

"Oh yes, a lot of difference," one of them said, "but Hitler said that too. They all do." The others seemed to disagree among themselves. There was some muttering. "Anyway," he went on, "what comes of it all? They'll smash our cities, they'll rape our women, they'll steal our watches, whether we fight or not. Because we can't win." I tried to disagree. "I am not talking about what's going to be the final outcome," he continued, "but first, and for some time, the Russians will win. And the Commies here will be proclaiming the liberation of Germany and all that stuff, but they won't be able to control the Red army, any more than in 1945. Every Commie will talk big until his own wife gets it, or his kid. Then he'll turn against it, but that just lands him in the camp of the MVD. So if we haven't fought, we'll be better off because then they'll do their fighting and looting in France — unless the French have sense, and don't fight either."

"Don't believe him," a rather thoughtful fellow said to me, "he likes to hear himself talk. But it is true, don't you think, that there isn't much sense in our fighting if we haven't a chance of winning?"

I conceded the point, but added that after all we wanted to *prevent* a war by this arming.

"All right then. Still, you have to have a chance. Do we? Hitler tried to fight the Russians and lost. He had over a hundred divisions. How many have we got? How many can we get? Suppose you said to us: we'll help you arm twenty divisions. Could they hope to fight fifty Russian divisions? I know some of your GI's think the Russians don't amount to much. Well, let me tell you — and I hope you won't be offended as an American — some of us found the Russians the toughest soldiers we had to fight. As for me, I'd rather fight an American than a Russian. So, what I think is that there is no sense in trying to have a German army fighting the Russians. We'll lose, sure thing."

"He is right," another said, "even though I did

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not find the Russians quite as good as he. In fact, I don't believe the Russkies fight very well once they get outside Russia. Still, they have very good weapons, like the field guns with which they licked us. But that isn't the whole story. The Russians don't care how they live; they are barbarians. They'd come for loot and women."

"Well," I said, "let's leave that aside. But wouldn't our air force make quite a difference? We could blast their communications and . . ."

"Oh, you with your air force," he interrupted me impatiently. "All that means is that more of our cities will be destroyed, more of our factories go to rack and ruin. How can you attack the Russians without attacking us? You bombed France in the last war, and you'd bomb us in this one. That, sir, is just our big point: unless there are strong enough ground forces, infantry most of all, to keep the Russians out of here, your air force means for us more harm than good. That's why your people who talk about neutralizing us are so crazy. If you Americans abandon us to neutral status, I am for making our peace with Russia and to hell with you."

"But now I am completely bewildered," I said. "Are you willing to go over to the Russian side?"

"Heavens no," they shouted in chorus. "Only the Commies want that. But you disarmed us and now you have to defend us. We can't make you, but you are morally obliged to, and you know it."

"He who conquers a country and rules it is responsible for its security," a young lawyer added rather testily.

I did not want to argue that point, so I observed: "Suppose we don't. Isn't it still your job to help defend Germany and Europe?"

"You don't seem to understand," my blond noncom remarked. "We'd like to help defend Germany, and Europe too, against those Reds, but now that you have destroyed our military how can we, unless you show us a way? Mind you, I don't blame you for destroying our military. Some of our militarists do, of course, but I don't like Prussian militarism, and I don't want a German army, because all the old brass would come back, and the Prussian sergeants too. But, heck, a fight is a fight, and unless you have a good army, you might just as well not start. If you'd open up enlistments in the American army a lot of fellows would enlist."

"How many?" I asked. Three of them said they would, if conditions were right. They seemed to realize that there was a lot of griping about the army by Americans but still they thought it would be so much better than the German army.

"Well, is there no way out, then, except trying to raise a volunteer force under American auspices?" I remarked rather dejectedly. You could not help getting troubled by their arguments; they were so sensible and so earnest, these disillusioned veterans of Hitler's mighty Wehrmacht.

"Oh yes," the thoughtful one who was studying political science began. "There is one way, and the only way. Help us organize a European army."

"Would you serve in a European army, but not in a German one?" Five of them said they would. "Why would you? Surely it is a strange thing for you fellows not to want to join a German army, but to join a European one!"

"That just shows, Herr Professor," a man spoke up who had been silent all the while, "how hard it is for you Americans to understand us. Let me tell you why. First, I believe a European army, backed by you, may have a chance; second, the Russians could not object to a European army, especially if the Germans came in when France and the others had been strengthened; third, in a European army our generals could not walk away with the show; and fourth, if I fought in a European army, I'd know what I was fighting for. I believe in a united Europe." "So do I! So do I!" several of them shouted. The systematic fellow looked about triumphantly as he added: "There is no help for Germany, or for Europe either, unless we get together. But it's got to be a real government of Europe, not just some lame international conference."

I recalled that the German parliament at Bonn had just passed a resolution, 360-odd to 40, instructing the German delegation going to Strasbourg, to work for a united Europe with all means at its disposal. "Do they represent general German sentiment?" I asked.

"Of course they do," one of them said. "Those politicians are limping behind the rest of us. The Schumacher boys just want to make people forget that they were against Germany's accepting the invitation to enter the Council of Europe."

It seemed very clear, though, that these fellows did not want to enter a European army unless it was controlled by a European government. "We must insist upon equality," one of them said suspiciously, "or the European army will become an army of German mercenaries and the rest of them will keep their national armies with just a regiment or two in the European army. And we don't want that."

Such was the tenor of our many talks last summer. But when I recently met with a group of German students visiting Harvard University under State Department auspices, I told them about what I had heard and asked whether it was still true.

"Sure," one of them said. "Look at the elections. A French politician said recently: 'If you want peace, prepare Europe.' We held a rally in Frankfurt before I left Germany. For German youth. We thought two thousand might come, to hear about next steps toward European unity. Twelve thousand turned up. A delegate from the Saar pleaded with them: 'Do not ask us Saarlanders to choose between France and Germany, but let us all choose Europe instead.' He got the biggest hand of the day. We are all sick of war, and we are afraid that you Americans will get us into another one."

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An Atlantic Story

An American of Irish antecedents, JAMES REYNOLDS *is an artist, sportsman, and country gentleman as much at home in Dublin as in Virginia. Like his grandmother before him, he is an expert on Irish ghosts; and on his recent return from Eire he stopped off at Boston to discuss with us a new series of ghost stories, of which this is the second to appear in the* Atlantic. *Meantime his first novel,* The Grand Wide Way, *published by the Creative Age Press, is meeting with a very favorable reception.*

THE MIDNIGHT SPINNERS

by JAMES REYNOLDS

DURING the summer of 1740 old Lord Clonrea was entertaining a visitor from Italy at Mount Pagan in the County Roscommon. Rich Roscommon the Irish call this county, to distinguish it, perhaps, from Poverty Cavan, a sparse, rock-strewn stretch of land. "God's own reason for blasphemy, the like ave thim Cavan roads," a Kerry man once told me, and his cart in a ditch with a broken axle. Actually Roscommon is rich because it is a prosperous farming region. The pastures well watered by gently flowing streams. There are a number of particularly handsome country houses in Roscommon. To my taste the finest by far is Palladian Rathcroaghan House.

Mount Pagan today is a fairly small building. It is long and wandering in line. Three or four periods of architecture are represented in what is left standing, for it suffered a punishing fire in 1860. Situated on a bold spur of rock, jutting out into Lough Garra, the house, even in its half-ruined state, has tremendous character. Once seen, the rose-red brick, with white-sashed windows, quoin stone trim, and delicately pillared Regency porch, is catalogued in one's mind and pleasantly remembered.

The Italian Renaissance wing, which was struck by lightning, stands today a charred tracery in stone festooned with scarlet juniper vine. Masses of purple and pink fuchsia cascade out of the yawning windows. It impresses the beholder as ruins in the grand manner, as do the paintings of ancient imperial Rome by Claude Lorrain.

The Italian stopping at Mount Pagan was an architect named Pietro Favianni. He had come to Ireland a few years before in the company of Richard Castle, the architect from Saxony who built so many houses in the Palladian taste for the Irish gentry. Favianni acted as assistant to Castle, and when his work on the elevations for Leinster House, Carton, and Russborough were finished, he treated himself to an extended tour through the Irish counties. During his visit to Mount Pagan the Italian became deeply attached to Lord Clonrea's daughter Aileen. Although the girl was fifteen years his junior, Favianni courted her with the well-known Italian ardor. Aileen Lydon and Pietro Favianni were married and settled down in the then comparatively new Renaissance wing at Mount Pagan. Later they planned a journey to Pistoia in Tuscany, Favianni's birthplace. But for a while all thought and energy must be centered on building a suitable house of their own.

One day when Pietro and Aileen were riding through the larch woods above Lough Garra, the horse that Pietro was riding turned sharply into a path which ended in a clearing. The riders sat spellbound. A lovely panorama spread before them: that unbeatable trinity of Nature — sky, undulating countryside, and shimmering water.

On his return to Mount Pagan that evening, Pietro set about sketching ideas for a wondrous house to be built on the spot they had come upon by surprise, the clearing in the wood above the lough. Favianni was enthusiastic and on his mettle, for the house must not only be worthy of its setting but must impress his father-in-law. The bare thought of that was a gauntlet cast in an architect's path. For weeks Favianni worked at top speed on

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his elevations and floor plans. At last they were finished. The house was to be called Rathcroaghan, for near Mount Pagan was a moss-covered Gaelic cross, set in a mound of stones. Stemming from antiquity, the cross was called Rath Croaghan Rest.

The day dawned when, accompanied by workmen with digging gear, Pietro paced off the length for an imposing frontage for his great house, to face the shining lough. All seemed to go well for a time; then the law raised one of its hydra heads. But even one ugly head was quite enough to thwart all of Favianni's plans. It appeared that more than half of the many acres of land bordering Lough Garra, which Lord Clonrea had given his daughter as a wedding present, belonged, by an ancient grant, to a colony of linen weavers and spinners. This land had been granted "in perpetuity" to a group of two hundred people by Lord Clonrea's grandfather eighty years before. The weavers lived in coteens which comprised the village of Ballyaghadereen on the opposite shore of the lough. These people grew their own flax and spun the finest linen in the county. Cloths made from this linen were sent as far abroad as Rome to be used as altar cloths in the Vatican.

When Aileen Favianni appealed to her father, he told her that the flax growers' claim was valid. He said he had forgotten — it had happened so long ago. Lord Clonrea offered to buy back the land at a fair price. No amount of money would shake the resolve of the weavers.

The elevations, so beautifully drawn by an inspired Pietro, were carefully laid away. The Faviannis divided their time between living at Mount Pagan and journeys to Italy.

Shortly after the miscarriage of the plans to build Rathcroaghan, Lord Clonrea died. There was talk of tearing down Mount Pagan and erecting Rathcroaghan on its foundations, but nothing ever came of this plan. Five years later, while on a visit to Pistoia, Pietro contracted a form of lingering swamp fever from which he never fully recovered. When he could travel he and Aileen returned to Ireland. During the following winter, which was particularly damp and bitter cold, the two were shut away from the outside world within the walls of drafty Mount Pagan, prey to arctic winds from off the lough. Just as spring was softening the air, Pietro Favianni died.

2

A YEAR passed; then Aileen Favianni went to Dublin for a season at The Castle, where brilliant viceregal society was as distinguished as that of any court in Europe. Later she crossed the Irish Sea to London, where she found herself the toast of Devonshire House and Carlton House Terrace.

One night when dining with the Prince of Wales at Vauxhall Gardens, Aileen met a handsome, quiet-mannered man named David Galloway. Although of Irish parentage, Galloway had lived all his life in England, for his father was one of the absentee landlords of immense Irish estates. David Galloway did not understand the fabric of the Irish mind, whether it was the aristocracy or the wild "mountainy man" from the Mourne Mountains.

In this very lack of understanding, in his very boast that he hated the Irish and could never live for long at peace with them, lay his ultimate undoing. It was not long after a swift courtship and marriage to Galloway that Aileen realized her grave mistake in marrying on such short acquaintance a man with whom she had so little in common. While of studious mind, Galloway was vastly different in temperament from gentle, visionary, ardent Pietro, for whom in her heart Aileen often longed. David soon proved a ruthless tyrant impossible to understand at any hour during the daily round. Where her wishes were concerned David insulted Aileen with his selfishness. Where his own desires were concerned he paid fantastic sums to gratify them. Fortunately for Aileen, her husband was an exceedingly rich man.

His rudeness, even animosity, towards aristocrat and countryman alike was marked. The first real encounter between David Galloway and a proud weaver from Ballyaghadereen was disastrous. Hearing from his wife of the clearing in the larch wood, he set out with her to see it. Instantly he saw the desirability of this spot whereon to erect a house worthy of his residence. A long-fronted Palladian house built on this lough-washed hill would rival Carton or Castletown. He would build it.

When Galloway was told by Aileen of the old grant given to the weavers "in perpetuity," he laughed in her face. An old, mildewed piece of parchment, no doubt. Not even decipherable. He could, and would, spike the guns of these bog-trotters.

From that moment, he set about his plans, and a dirty business it was. He found he could buy land on three sides of the weavers' grant. With the waters of the lough as the fourth boundary he could completely surround the disputed property. Their flax fields, without which they could not exist, would be useless because he could forbid right-of-way.

Notwithstanding a rising wave of protest from neighboring landowners and threats against his person from a few frantic weavers in Ballyaghadereen, Galloway went arrogantly ahead with his plans. He drove the weavers out of their flax fields and out of their village as well, by the fact of making it impossible for them to live from their fields or in the village. Aileen protested and implored her husband to stop before a tragedy occurred, but he paid her no heed. Finally, stealthily, families began to disappear from the village. A family or two at a time. Some sought the flax fields in County Down, others

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disappeared without trace. One morning Galloway stepped out of his doorway at Mount Pagan and walked across the terrace. He found a sentence written in red chalk across the stones. Stooping, he read: YOU HAVE TAKEN ALL WE HAD. FROM YOU WE HAVE TAKEN PEACE OF MIND. Yet these desperate, infuriated weavers had *left* something for their tormentor as well — unease, and the ear that listens in the night.

After David Galloway had resided at Rathcroaghan House for a year, Aileen decided to enlarge the rose garden which was part of the old demesne of Mount Pagan. One morning early, she went with a gardener to the far end of the rose allée, where climbing yellow roses grew in abundance. Two tall marble plinths set on lion-claw feet acted as finials to the allée. Suddenly Aileen stopped, clutching at her throat. There again was the chalked warning — written this time in blue, similar to the warning in red found by a gardener a year ago. Seen by David Galloway as well, but scoffed at by him as he spat and walked away. This time the words read: LISTEN FOR THE SPINNERS. THEN LOOK FOR THE SHROUD.

When Rathcroaghan House, built from plans by Pietro Favianni, was finished, the façade presented to the world was flawless in proportion and ornament. But inside the house, persons trod warily when house doors were closed at night and candles were snuffed in the high-ceilinged rooms. When the household prepared for sleep, unease stalked the corridors. For the writing on the stones was remembered. Sleep was often slow in visiting inhabitants of this house. Tardy sleepers lay watchful, wondering, Will the spinners spin tonight?

3

Marie Elena Galloway was nineteen years old in the summer of 1768. In two days she was to be married and leave Lough Garra. The ceremony was to be performed in a bower of yellow roses erected on a trellis under the larch trees where one looked off and away across the lough. Marie Elena was keyed to high excitement, for all day boxes had been arriving from Dublin and Paris via the Galway packet boat. The wedding was set for Thursday. On this Tuesday night the persons in the house were the Galloway family of three and a young girl cousin of Aileen's from Dublin. The servants slept in a detached building adjoining the stables. Around eleven o'clock all retired for the night. Soon the house was quiet.

A little past midnight Aileen Galloway was awakened by a whirring sound. Loud at first, it seemed to rise and fall in volume. As Aileen sat up in bed, listening, she thought the sound was like innumerable birds rising from or settling on water, when the vibration of movement and sound claws at the nerves. Suddenly the sound died away to a hushed whirr, then ceased altogether. Aileen rose from her bed and went into the hallway. She stopped short — for there, standing rigid in the doorway of her bedroom, was Marie Elena. On her face was a look of staring-eyed fear. She rushed towards her mother. The two women listened. There — the whirring rose and fell in cadences. But now it had an angry sound, finally rising to great intensity, then dying away to what sounded strangely like sobbing.

All the next day, during the confusion of arriving wedding guests, the minds of mother and daughter were dark pools of foreboding, each one remembering all too surely the words of warning which had been twice chalked on the marble plinths years ago. Just before teatime one of her friends suggested to Marie Elena that all the women would like to see her wonderful trousseau. It was a fine topic of gossip in the countryside that David Galloway had been prodigal in his outlay for the wedding, for Marie Elena was the apple of his eye. Aileen bade her daughter take her friends upstairs and show them her lovely dresses, which were laid on tables and chairs. On the bed, spread out in shimmering folds, lay her satin wedding gown.

As Marie Elena entered the room, she smelled above the scent of lavender from her linen a subtle but penetrating odor of decay — damp, musty, sickening to the nostrils. Marie Elena stopped beside the bed. One of her friends put a hand on her arm. "Marie Elena, what is *that*, for the love of God, there on your wedding dress?" Folded, uncreased, looking as if freshly woven, lay a linen shroud. It gleamed even whiter than the billows of satin which formed the skirt of the dress. Slowly Marie Elena lifted the shroud from her bridal dress and stroked the rough linen, as if fascinated. At that minute Aileen appeared at the door. She came quickly to her daughter's side, snatching the shroud out of her hand. Everyone in the room was staring, speechless, at the dreadful garment, which seemed to have a life of its own. Then Aileen fainted; the shroud fell from her hand to the floor and lay stiffly, assuming, almost, the silhouette of a corpse laid out for burial. As one of the women present dashed water from a pitcher over Aileen's face, Marie Elena stood trembling. Her lips moved, forming the words, "I heard the spinners; now I've found the shroud."

Before dinner that night unrest rode the wind at Rathcroaghan House with a vengeance. Wedding guests gathered in whispering groups. An eavesdropper would have heard snatches of conversation: "What does it all mean?" — "Where did that horrible shroud come from?" — "Something dreadful is bound to happen in this house, I think I shall leave."

When everyone was gathered in the drawing room, Barstow announced dinner. Marie Elena left her room and came hurriedly along the upper

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gallery. As she started to descend the stairs the heel of her slipper caught in the runner of carpet laid on the stairs. With a terrified shriek, she pitched headlong down the long flight of steps. Her father was the first to reach her. Tenderly he gathered his daughter in his arms. Her head lolled slackly on her broken neck, for Marie Elena was dead.

Later that night a snarled skein of dried flax threads was found crowded near the baseboard on the top stair. Listen for the spinners. Then look for the shroud!

After the tragic death of his daughter the day before her wedding, David Galloway was a changed man. He became a recluse, withdrawn and morose. Shut away in his study, he saw no one. A valet looked after his needs. This man reported below-stairs that his master was "near demented" and sat up all night before a window looking away across the lough. During these long nights David listened, listened — dozing fitfully, but always aware, listening. At times he would curse and rage against remorseless fate. Gradually his mind seemed easier.

The night before the first anniversary of Marie Elena's death, Aileen returned from Dublin, where she had been on a visit to relatives. She and her husband dined together for the first time in many months. They discussed the flowers to be gathered from the garden for a little ceremony which they had planned for the next day. Aileen retired to her room early and David sought the quiet of his study. The house was closed and darkened for the night.

Softly at first — hardly distinguishable — the whirring sound commenced. The sound of ghostly spinning. Many spinners there were tonight. Wave upon wave of sound. Louder it whined. Spinning — spinners — spin. Then on a crescendo of demoniac sound the whirring rose, until pandemonium reigned within the walls of Rathcroaghan House.

David ran from the library into the hall. As he did so, he tripped over something white, stretched out on the floor in front of the drawing-room door. As David fell to his knees he groped in the darkness. His shivering hand clutched a damp linen shroud. Even in the warm night the linen was clammy and reeked of decay. Throwing the ghastly cloth aside, David dashed up the stairs to his wife's room. The room was empty, but the window over the front terrace was standing wide open. Crumpled grotesquely on the stones of the terrace lay the body of Aileen Galloway.

For twenty-five years Rathcroaghan House stood lonely, shuttered, despised by its owner and shunned by men. In a paroxysm of rage and grief, abetted by the ever-present fear for his own life, David Galloway had remained in the house facing the lough only long enough to bury his wife in the family plot behind the rose garden. He had the marble plinths, which reminded him of the spinners' curse written in chalk, torn down and thrown into the lough. Then he shuttered the house, leaving it a prey to rats, decay, and the vagaries of the elements.

Galloway swore to heaven he would never put his feet inside the lintel of his hated house as long as he lived. For many years he lived in self-imposed exile. At first he ranged restlessly through Austria, Germany, and France. For a few years he lived, recluse, in a huge drafty villa in the Roman campagna. One may see it today, Villa Marie Elena, a high, square, bare-faced structure blankly facing the Alban Hills.

One afternoon in early autumn a heavy traveling coach rumbled in at the gates of Rathcroaghan House. Swinging up the leaf-choked driveway the coachman braked to a halt in front of the pillared porch of the silent house. Crouched back into the shadows of the coach was an old man, ill and wretched. Knowing he had not long to live, David Galloway had broken his oath and come back, after two decades of wandering, to visit the graves of his wife and daughter. As the footman helped him to alight, David bade him unlock the front door and then wait for him; he wished to fetch a few books from the library, then he would go to visit the two graves near the rose garden. Once in the gloom of the dust-rimed library David searched for the books he wanted. Had he not been deaf he might have heard the whirr and whine of a spinning wheel eddying through the stillness of his house. The desired books located, David let himself out of a side door and drawing his traveling cloak snugly around his shoulders, against the rising wind from off the lough, he walked along the paths of the tangled garden towards the burial plot.

For a long time the coachman waited in the bitter wind, but his master did not return. Setting out along the path to the rose garden the man muttered that he must get the master back into the house and light a fire, this perishing cold was not good for a sick old man. Then — at the end of the rose walk the coachman found David Galloway. He lay dead beside the grave of his daughter. There were livid purple marks on his throat, and across his shoulders was flung a freshly woven shroud.

Rathcroaghan House has been reclaimed. In 1900 a member of the Tarby family restored the house to its original, and present, state.

The grateful house presents an unscarred face to the changing moods of Lough Garra. Friendliness and pleasant activity surround the demesne. Cheerful country murmurs, the like of whispering larches, the song of harvesters, and bird song in the brake. But no one hears the whirr of spinning any more. With David Galloway's death the ghostly spinners folded their wheels, pocketed their linen reels, and departed. The curse was broken.

In a locked cupboard in the library of Rathcroaghan House, carefully folded and shriven white, lie three heavy linen shrouds.

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SUMNER H. SLICHTER, *Lamont University Professor at Harvard, has been rated by* Fortune *as "the best-known economist in the United States. He is the public's economist, labor's economist, and the businessman's economist." His forthcoming book,* What's Ahead for American Business, *is predicated on the belief that our contest with Soviet Russia is primarily a contest of production. Events may plunge us into total mobilization, but short of that emergency Mr. Slichter believes that, if we are vigilant, we can build up our defenses and at the same time maintain a dynamic economy. One of our most immediate responsibilities, he argues, is to stop a runaway increase in prices.*

CAN WE HOLD DOWN PRICES?

by SUMNER H. SLICHTER

1

DURING the next twelve months the volume of personal income after taxes (at present tax rates) will rise by 15 billion dollars a year or more, but output of consumer goods will remain about the same or perhaps drop a little. That sentence states the crux of the problem of inflation. Four principal influences will bring about the increase in personal incomes: the number of people at work will increase by 1.5 million to 2 million; the weekly hours of work will increase; many employees will shift from lower-paying occupations into higher-paying ones; and wage rates will rise.

The country will raise its rate of output during the next twelve months — perhaps by 15 billion dollars or more in terms of present dollars. But this gain in output will all be needed for defense and foreign military aid. The outlays of industry on plant and equipment will be about as high in 1951 as in 1950 because defense orders will require large outlays on equipment. Hence, consumers will be fortunate if there is no drop in the total supplies available for consumption. As a matter of fact, there probably will be a small drop — perhaps 5 billion dollars a year, or about 2.5 per cent.

Any cut in the demand for goods or *any* increase in supplies helps to control inflation, but the problem in the main is one of preventing rising personal incomes from being used to bid up the prices of the very limited supplies of consumer goods. It is wise to remember this because many proposals for checking inflation do not reach the heart of the problem — they do not reduce the gap between personal incomes and the supply of consumer goods.

Opinions on how to check inflation are sharply divided. There are two principal schools of thought. One school would rely mainly or solely upon the so-called "indirect" controls — strict control of credit, higher taxes, reduction in government spending, and the encouragement of saving. The other school would rely upon "direct" controls — that is, ceilings on prices and wages, allocations of materials, and rationing. Much can undoubtedly be done to keep the rise in prices moderate, but the more closely one looks at the various anti-inflation programs the more one is forced to the conclusion that *some* rise in prices is inevitable and that the advocates of the various proposals are making excessive claims for their wares.

Some of the anti-inflationary measures would be effective within narrow limits, but only within these limits. Hence they would be helpful, but not adequate. A few of the so-called "controls" are not controls at all — they would aggravate, not check, inflation. Finally, some of the most effective controls have little political appeal and will be used only sparingly and perhaps not at all. Let us examine briefly the merits of some of the specific controls — first indirect ones and then direct ones.

Strict controls on credit. Rapid expansion of credit during the second half of 1950 aggravated inflation, and it is plain that strict control of credit is badly needed. But credit restrictions are of limited usefulness because they cannot close the gap between personal incomes and the supply of consumer goods. They simply prevent the gap between the supply of consumer goods and the demand for them from being made still wider by borrowing.

Higher taxes on corporations. Taxes on corporate profits have been greatly increased and President Truman is proposing additional increases. But higher taxes on corporate profits would have little or no effect upon the size of personal incomes. They might have a small effect through limiting the dividend disbursements of corporations. One should remember, however, that dividends provide less than 5 per cent of all personal incomes.

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Some people argue that higher taxes on corporations would help increase the supply of consumer goods because they would force corporations to cut expenditures on plant and equipment and thus would release raw materials, labor, and productive capacity for making consumer goods. Under *other* circumstances, higher taxes on corporations probably would limit expenditures on plant and equipment. During the next year, however, most of the buying of plant and equipment will be for reasons that are little affected by higher corporation taxes — to acquire equipment needed in defense production or to hold down labor costs. Consequently, corporations will finance purchases of plant and equipment, if necessary, by selling some of their large holdings of government securities or by borrowing from banks. Each of these methods is inflationary. Hence, higher corporate income taxes may accentuate rather than retard inflation.

Sales taxes. The effect of a sales tax in a strong sellers' market is quite mixed. It is a tax on spending, and thus tends to encourage some people to save. But in times of strong demand the main effect of a sales tax would be to raise prices. Furthermore, the rise in prices produced by sales taxes may increase the pressure for higher wages — another inflationary effect. In defense of the sales tax one may argue that the revenue from the higher prices caused by the sales tax would not increase private incomes but would go to the government.

Higher taxes on personal incomes. Increases in the personal income tax are undoubtedly the most anti-inflationary kind of taxes, but even the effect of higher income tax rates may be quite limited. If the higher tax falls mainly on people who are in the habit of doing some saving (for example, people of moderate or high incomes), the tax may limit saving as well as the demand for consumer goods. To the extent that the higher tax limits saving, it is not anti-inflationary. The kind of change in the income tax that would be most anti-inflationary is a reduction in exemptions. Lower exemptions would not cut the volume of saving appreciably; their principal effect would be to reduce the demand for consumer goods. But this excellent weapon against inflation has little political appeal.

Reductions in nonessential government expenditures. Cuts in government spending are just as anti-inflationary as cuts in personal consumption. Hence, economies in government operation and postponement of unnecessary government outlays are useful ways of checking inflation. Unfortunately, these methods are quite limited in their possibilities. The very fact that employment is high and the country is trying to raise production compels the government to make many expenditures that would not otherwise be necessary. The need for larger outlays on new highways and on the maintenance of existing highways is an example. Nevertheless, cuts of several billion dollars a year in non-defense expenditures are possible and would be an effective way of limiting the demand for goods.

Personal saving. An increase in personal saving may be an even more effective check upon inflation than increases in the income tax. The anti-inflationary effect of higher income taxes, as I have just pointed out, may be limited by a decrease in savings. An increase in savings, on the other hand, does not produce smaller income tax payments. But an increase in saving is not *necessarily* anti-inflationary, because the savings may be invested in land, old houses, or existing supplies of stocks or bonds and thus help bring about a rise in the prices of real estate or securities. Savings are anti-inflationary when they are held as cash or bank deposits or are invested in new issues of government bonds. During the Second World War, individuals accumulated cash and bank deposits on a large scale and also purchased huge quantities of government bonds. Personal holdings of cash and demand bank deposits increased from 16.7 billion dollars at the end of 1941 to 45.7 billion at the end of 1945, and personal holdings of government securities from 8.2 billion dollars to 41.6 billion during the same period.

People who accumulated cash or bank deposits or bought government bonds during the recent war have lost much of the purchasing power of these savings because prices have risen well above wartime levels. Consequently, people may not be as willing today as they were ten years ago to hold cash or to buy government bonds. Price ceilings and material controls, as I shall point out presently, will encourage saving because they will make it impossible for people to get the kind and quality of goods that they wish. It would be desirable, however, for the government to have a carefully planned program to encourage saving and the buying of government securities. But the individual who buys a government bond runs considerable risk that the purchasing power of his principal will drop. If he is to be persuaded to invest in government bonds rather than real estate, stocks, or some other "inflation hedge," he must be offered a generous rate of interest to compensate him for this risk or he should be offered a bond that is redeemable (if held a minimum period) in the same amount of purchasing power that he paid for it.

2

What about the efficacy of direct controls — price ceilings, wage ceilings, allocations of materials, and rationing?

Price ceilings. Price ceilings only prevent inflation in part. Inflation takes the form of reduction in quality, of shifts of transactions to black markets, of the failure of industry to make the kind and quality of goods that the market demands. If one has to buy a gaily colored sport shirt when one really

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wishes a plain utility shirt, the purchasing power of one's dollar has dropped. Unfortunately, ceilings on prices are least effective with respect to the very kinds of goods that are most important in the cost of living — namely, food and apparel. For example, between 1942 and 1945, when the consumer price index increased 10.2 per cent, foods went up 12.3 per cent and apparel 17.5 per cent.

The enforcement of price ceilings is difficult in the case of food because the food products may move from the farm into local black markets before they even reach the cities, where most of the consumers live. Ceilings on apparel have limited effectiveness partly because quality cannot be controlled and partly because producers stop making the items on which price ceilings most severely limit profits. Perhaps these effects can be mitigated by allocating a certain proportion of raw materials for the making of low-priced items, but this would involve additional controls to assure that low-priced items really are made.

Since price ceilings prevent consumers from getting the kind and quality of goods that they desire, ceilings do discourage spending — as was plainly shown by the rapid rise in personal holdings of cash and demand deposits during the Second World War. Perhaps the remedy was almost as bad as the disease, but many people did wait until they could buy the kind of goods they wished.

Wage ceilings. Wage ceilings are an essential part of a scheme of price control in a strong sellers' market. Otherwise the wage demands of strong unions will accelerate the rise in prices, as recent experience in the steel and coal industries shows. But wage controls must be flexible. Since no one knows how much prices will rise, wage controls are not likely to command public support unless they permit wages to rise as much as the cost of living. Furthermore, a few larger increases will be needed in order to give workers an inducement to go into rapidly expanding war industries — particularly to go to places where housing is scarce or living conditions are unattractive.

Many people do not regard the type of wage control that I suggest as worth having — they think it would be too inflationary. Nevertheless, the practical choice is between flexible controls that command public support and can be strictly enforced and more rigid ones that can be made workable only by permitting many exceptions, as was done in the case of the Little Steel Formula during the Second World War. As a matter of fact, had wages been adjusted closely to the cost of living during the Second World War, the rise would have been a little bit slower than it actually was.

Material controls and allocations. An effective way of discouraging the demand for consumer goods and thereby limiting inflation is to prevent industry from making the kind and quality of goods that consumers desire to buy. Price ceilings, as I have pointed out, do this to a certain extent — though that is not their purpose. A more effective restraint on consumer demand, however, comes from restrictions on the use of scarce materials. This, of course, is not one of the intended effects of material controls; the restrictions are necessary in order that scarce materials be available for defense goods. Nevertheless, when automobiles, refrigerators, stoves, radios, and many other goods contain greater or less quantities of substitute materials, many would-be buyers decide not to purchase now but to wait until goods of standard quality become available. Postponement of buying for this reason will undoubtedly be an important check on inflation during the next year or two.

Rationing without price ceilings. For some types of goods the most effective way to protect the purchasing power of the consumer's dollar would be rationing, without price controls. This is likely to be true in the case of goods that would otherwise go into black markets or that cannot be controlled in quality. Meat is an example. The rise in prices would be substantial, but rationing would limit the ability of the well-to-do (and the ability of hotels, dining car services, clubs, and restaurants) to bid up the price. Even though prices would rise somewhat, the consumer would get more for his money. Unfortunately, the case for rationing without price controls is not easily understood by the public, and government officials may not be willing either to attempt to explain the case or to assume the responsibility of imposing rationing on consumers while not subjecting sellers to price ceilings.

3

From this list of indirect and direct controls on inflation, a fairly effective anti-inflation program could be constructed. Sales taxes and increases in taxes on corporations should be avoided, because they are likely to contribute to inflation. Strict control of credit is, of course, a "must," even though it is not capable of closing the gap between personal incomes and the supply of consumer goods. Reduction in nonessential government expenditures is another "must," although it probably cannot be expected to limit demand by more than 3 or 4 billion dollars a year. Higher income taxes are essential, but Congress will probably not be willing to go very far in taxing away part of the gap between personal incomes and the supply of consumer goods. Wage controls, like credit controls, will not close the gap between incomes and the supply of goods, but they will help prevent it from growing larger.

If the demand for goods can be reduced by about 3 or 4 billion dollars a year through reductions in nonessential government spending and another 4 billion dollars a year by higher income taxes, a third to a half of the inflationary gap will have been closed. Perhaps the rest of the gap will not be

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closed. If it is closed, this will have to be accomplished by an increase in personal savings. Price controls and material controls may be so effective in preventing consumers from being able to buy the kind of goods that they desire, that the rate of saving will rise by 7 to 10 billion dollars a year.

This increase in saving may or may not bring about an unhealthy inflation in the prices of securities and real estate. Hence the government should endeavor both to encourage saving and to absorb savings by offering securities that millions of thrifty people would find attractive. The combined effect of strict control of credit, a moderate reduction in government expenditures, an increase in income tax rates producing several billions of revenue a year, the limitation of wage increases to the rise in consumer prices, and a well-designed program of selling government bonds to individuals would be to limit the rise in prices to around 5 per cent a year. If this sounds discouraging, let the reader remember that from 1945 to 1946 the consumer price index rose 8.5 per cent; from 1946 to 1947, 14.2 per cent; and from 1947 to 1948, 7.5 per cent.

Let me conclude with a few words on a neglected but important subject. In several ways inflation is being suppressed or postponed. For example, the increase in the length of the work week tends to bring about postponed inflation because, when the work week eventually drops, workers will demand compensating wage increases and these, in turn, will bring about price increases. Furthermore, if prices are held down more effectively than wages during the next year or two, inflation will be postponed because prices must ultimately adjust themselves to labor costs. Finally, inflation is postponed when the inability of consumers to buy the kind and quality of goods they desire causes them to defer purchasing.

It is better to postpone inflation than to have it now, because two or three years hence supplies will be more abundant and the danger of a runaway increase in prices will be less. And the longer inflation is postponed, the better is the chance that technological progress will so cut costs and increase supplies that the postponed inflation never occurs. It is plain, however, that the problem of checking inflation will be with us for several years.

THE ORCHESTRA THAT PLAYED

by R. P. LISTER

THERE was an orchestra that played in the land of might-have-been,
And the fiddlers had fat faces and the fiddles they played were lean;
The flutes were as shrill as the whistles that are carried by stout police,
And the clarinets stuck out in rows like the necks of the flying geese.

And very thin were the tunes they played, as thin as a thin, thin soup,
They whispered softly as falling leaves when the autumn branches droop.
The breath of the blowers was louder yet than the notes that the blowers blew,
And the cellists sawed at their shaking strings, but hardly a sound came through.

And I saw the trumpeter trumpeting, but the sound was far away,
Like the skirl of a Jura bagpipe from the shores of Colonsay;
The tympanist thumped his kettledrums, but the noise was faint and small,
As if a ghost with a wooden leg went tiptoe across the hall.

Was it an audience I saw, or rows of unpeopled chairs,
And were they the ghosts within my hall, or was I the ghost in theirs?
I stared at the tall conductor, who swayed with a stately grace,
His hands were long and his hands were lean, and I feared to see his face.

So I left them there with their faded tune, like a muted summer stream;
And were they the world that was wide awake, and was I a moment's dream?
The players were fat and lightly clad and the music was thin and gray,
And I hoisted my clouds about my head and I softly came away.

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A connoisseur of odd places and personalities, JOSEPH WECHSBERG *has spent most of the past six years in writing about them from vantage points in Europe. From Vienna he sends this true account of a young locksmith's apprentice who bestowed on himself enough bogus engineering honors to hoax successfully the Nazi army and bureaucracy alike. Mr. Wechsberg was born in Czechoslovakia and is now an American citizen; he is the author of a novel,* Continental Touch, *and several books about European travel.*

THE MAN WHO FOOLED HITLER

by JOSEPH WECHSBERG

1

BLIND respect for a uniform, any kind of uniform, is a typical German national trait. But during the Nazi regime there was at least one man who turned the tables on the Nazis and used a uniform to make fun of the Gestapo, the Nazi Party, and the Wehrmacht. His name is Elfried Schmidt, and he is a 31-year-old streetcar conductor in Vienna, Austria. When I was in Vienna recently I heard of Schmidt's incredible experience and called at the modest, cold-water flat where he lives with his wife and three children.

A thin, sad-looking man with a boyish face and gentle eyes, Schmidt speaks in a cautious voice, as if he were forever afraid of people. He has an ineradicable air of what he is — a streetcar conductor — and he knows it. Yet twelve years ago this mild and humble Austrian perpetrated a truly fantastic hoax. Using Hitler's own technique — the bigger the lie, the better its chance of being believed — he succeeded in making his victims so ridiculous that when he was finally caught, the authorities' only concern was to hush the story up.

The story begins in 1938 in a village some twenty miles from Vienna that shall be called Rampersdorf. His uncle, Professor Hinner, a noted botanist, was the parish priest of Rampersdorf. Elfried Schmidt and his mother lived at the church house. It was a few months after the *Anschluss* and the local Nazis were in an exuberant mood. Denunciation and persecution flourished. If you didn't like a man's looks or wanted his shop, all you had to do was denounce him to the Gestapo as an "enemy of the people." The Gestapo took care of the rest. The Nazis hated the village priest, and they didn't like Schmidt's mother, either, who was rumored to have helped refugees across the near-by Hungarian border.

Schmidt, himself an outspoken anti-Nazi, was nineteen years old, working on and off as a locksmith's apprentice. There had been no money to send him to the Technical University in Vienna so that he could become an engineer, but he knew a lot more than the average locksmith apprentice. For years he had haunted the streetcar terminals in Vienna, studying cars, machines, tracks, switches. A skilled draftsman, he liked to invent things, and in the hall of his uncle's house hung a large technical blueprint of an electric Diesel rail-car he had drawn. Elsa, the girl whom Schmidt hoped to marry some day, often stared at the blueprint and exclaimed, "What a pity, Elfried, that you didn't become an engineer!"

"I guess it was Elsa's remarks that started me off," Schmidt said to me, looking thoughtfully out the window. "Her remarks and my uncle's precarious position. There were rumors that the Nazis were going to send him to a concentration camp. He wouldn't be the first priest to go. I used to sit up nights wondering how I could help him. All kinds of wild ideas occurred to me. It had to be something to make the Gestapo *afraid* of me. But what? I couldn't very well tell them that I had been received by Hitler. Or could I? The more I thought of the crazy scheme, the better I liked it. Suppose I had made an important invention which had come to the ears of important Nazis? Why, I might even be made an engineer — not an ordinary engineer, but a sort of National Socialist engineer who had been decorated by Hitler in person.

The next day Schmidt went to Vienna, carrying with him the blueprint of the Diesel rail-car. He returned a few days later with a brief case containing several rubber stamps and a number of rather astonishing letters. In the first letter, of which there was only the carbon, Schmidt asked the German State Railroad "to consider the enclosed technical drawing." The second letter, from the German State Railroad, informed Schmidt that the drawing had been forwarded with a recommendation to the

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Transport Ministry in Berlin. The third letter, again from the State Railroad, announced that the blueprint had met with assent in Berlin. "Such gifted young people as you can be sponsored only by our National Socialist regime," the letter said. A final letter from the German State Railroad informed Schmidt that a large factory had been ordered to produce his new Diesel rail-car, and offered Schmidt a job that would "correspond to your exceptional talents."

"I wrote those letters in Vienna," Schmidt told me. "In our Catholic Youth Organization we'd had correspondence with the Traffic Ministry and used a rubber stamp for the address, *An das Reichsverkehrsministerium, Abwicklungstelle Österreich.* I cut off the words '*An das* — to the' and used the rest as letterhead. With this letterhead it wasn't difficult to order rubber stamps of the State Railroad and of the Technical University. The Nazis were great believers in the 'round stamp,' containing the swastika and eagle, so I ordered one of these from a stamp maker who didn't know me. Everything had to have an air of unchallengeable authenticity."

Back home Schmidt marked his blueprint with several official stamps saying INCOMING, CONSIDERED, and APPROVED, added some illegible signatures, and put it back on the wall. That same afternoon he learned from a friend that two Gestapo men had arrived in the village and that his uncle might be arrested at any moment. Something had to be done right away. The blueprint and the few letters were not sufficient to impress the Gestapo.

Schmidt promptly sat down at his typewriter and wrote a letter in which the University of Berlin informed Elfried Schmidt that he had been awarded by the Führer the title *Ingenieur Honoris Causa.* Herr Engineer Schmidt was ordered to present himself on August 25 at 11 A.M. at the Reich Chancellery in Berlin to be received by the Führer.

"I showed the letter to my mother," Schmidt said to me, "telling her I'd received it in Vienna. I didn't dare look her in the eye, but she was too worried about my uncle to notice anything. Only my uncle, calm as ever, read the letter carefully and gave me a funny look. An hour later the whole village knew of the great honor that had been bestowed upon me. And the two Gestapo men never showed up."

On August 24, Schmidt left for Berlin, where he spent a few days sight-seeing and writing postcards home about his visit with the Führer. He took a good look at the Chancellery, from the outside, and also bought a folder with a sketchy description of Hitler's office. Back in Vienna, it occurred to him that he should have a diploma. So he bought a piece of cardboard decorated with a Virgin holding a laurel wreath, surrounded by naked little angels; beneath was printed, in large letters, HONORARY DIPLOMA. Schmidt wrote his name and new title on the diploma, added the round stamp with swastika and eagle, and scribbled several signatures.

Rampersdorf was in an uproar. People who had hardly known Schmidt went out of their way to greet him. Leading Nazis wanted to shake the hand that had touched the Führer's. At a big party given by the Town Council, Schmidt was asked to describe his visit.

"What did you tell them?" I asked.

Schmidt shook his head as if even now it seemed hard to believe. "I said, 'The door was opened and I found myself face to face with our dearly beloved Führer.' I described how Hitler had come toward me, 'smiling benevolently, like a father'; how he had listened to me, his arms folded across his chest, as I had seen in many photographs. I told how he had conferred on me the title of honorary engineer. When they asked me what Hitler looked like, face to face, I looked sort of bewitched and said, 'I suppose he looks just the way you imagine. Just like Hitler.' A few women started to cry and the men blew their noses. They looked at me with such stupid, wide-eyed admiration that I couldn't help adding that the Führer had said to me, 'My dear Schmidt, if you ever need anything, just get in touch with me.' I also implied that Hitler had given me his secret telephone number."

Schmidt shook his head again. "It sounds idiotic, but they swallowed every word of it."

Two days later Schmidt met a classmate, Peter, who asked him how he had addressed the Führer.

Schmidt shrugged. "I said, 'Heil, Herr Reichskanzler.'"

"That's funny," said Peter. "My father once went to a big official reception, and all guests were instructed to say, 'Heil, mein Führer.'"

"Maybe they didn't instruct me because they knew I hadn't been a Nazi before," Schmidt said, trying to look unconcerned.

"Maybe," said Peter, "but it's strange. I must tell my father."

2

SCHMIDT went home with wobbly knees. He had to do something quickly. One thing could help: a uniform. A resplendent, fantastic uniform that would convince everybody of his rank and position. The Nazis loved uniforms; they believed in uniforms. Schmidt went to Vienna and bought two shoulder straps corresponding to the rank of major in the German Army. While he was in the shop, a magnificent silver *fourragère* for staff officers took his fancy. The clerk asked whether he had a military purchase permit. Schmidt replied, quite truthfully, that he needed the insignia "for a show." He got the *fourragère,* and also a swastika arm band with silver edge, worn only by very high Party dignitaries. In another shop he purchased a cap with rich silver trimming.

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Back home, he took out his dinner jacket, sewed the *fourragère* on the wrong (left) side, and put one of the major's shoulder straps on his left shoulder.

"Why only one?" I asked.

"I didn't want to look like a major," Schmidt said. "I wanted to have a uniform such as no one else in Germany wore. Then no one could accuse me of impersonating an officer or an official. I liked myself so much when I looked in the mirror that I had to show off to Mother. I told her the uniform went with the diploma. Mother was overwhelmed and asked about the silver cord. Then I had an idea that could have been Hitler's. I said, 'Mother, this is the silver honor cord of the Third Reich.' My mother gave me a long, sad look and said nothing."

Schmidt walked around just long enough to impress people, and departed for Vienna. At the railroad station a soldier standing with his arm around a girl saw Schmidt, let go of the girl, snapped to attention, and gave Schmidt a smart salute. In Vienna he was respectfully saluted by three colonels and various staff officers. He began to enjoy himself and became bolder.

Two days later he crossed Schwarzenbergplatz to speak to Dr. David Silber, a Jewish lawyer and friend of his uncle's, just as two Gestapo men stopped the lawyer and asked for his papers. While Dr. Silber fumbled in his pockets, Schmidt approached and said arrogantly, "I am Engineer Schmidt, bearer of the silver honorary cord of the Third Reich awarded to me personally by the Führer. This gentleman is my old friend Welfing. I vouch for him." And before the Gestapo men had recovered from their surprise, Schmidt turned to Dr. Silber and said, "Let's go, Joachim. The next time, don't leave your papers at home." Later, Schmidt arranged for the lawyer and his wife to go to Rampersdorf, where Schmidt's mother got them across the Austro-Hungarian border.

A great many of Schmidt's friends seemed to be in trouble and came to see him, having heard of his exalted position. Schmidt did his best for them. He designed a special identity card according to which Engineer Honoris Causa E. Schmidt had been "awarded the silver honor cord by the Führer and Reichskanzler." All subordinate organs of the Party were ordered by the Führer to give Schmidt "all needed aid and assistance." The card never failed him. When he heard that Herr Huber, a friend of his mother's, had been sent to Dachau, he walked straight into the office of the Nazi *Kreisleiter* of Vienna's Tenth District, threw his card on the table, and glared at him.

"I assumed a harsh, superior air," Schmidt continued his story, "and said I wanted to know about Huber — why had he been sent to Dachau? The *Kreisleiter* replied meekly that Huber had been arrested for 'antisocial' behavior. I got very angry. 'I happen to know that Huber was denounced by a personal enemy who wanted to get hold of his firm,' I said. 'The Führer told me only last week that he doesn't approve of such action. Incidentally, I expect to see the Führer in Berlin on Thursday or Friday. Unless this matter is straightened out within forty-eight hours, I will have to report you directly to the Führer.'

"The *Kreisleiter's* face took on the color of rancid butter. He said he was very sorry, he hadn't known all the facts. I said, 'I want Huber to report to my apartment within forty-eight hours.' And I walked out.

"Well, it's hard to believe, but it worked. A few days later Huber and his wife safely crossed into Hungary. In all, I sent some forty people to my mother."

3

On November 23, 1938, Schmidt was drafted for the Luftwaffe. He didn't mind. The comedy was beginning to get on his nerves. In the army he would become an anonymous soldier; people would forget while he was away. As a recruit, *Kanonier* Schmidt got the rough treatment given privates all over the world and spent long hours shoveling snow.

A few days before Christmas, Schmidt was called into the guardroom, where his classmate Peter was waiting. Peter's father had become a Nazi official and Peter had come to warn Elfried. "Father thinks the whole business about the engineer's title and the silver cord is a swindle. He wants to check up on you in Berlin."

Gripped by cold fear, Schmidt somehow managed to seem unperturbed. "Thank you," he said with sarcasm. "If that's why you came all the way from Rampersdorf, you can go back straight away. Heil Hitler!" He turned on his heel and walked out.

He didn't sleep that night, though. He had to do something or his whole family would be in trouble. Something was needed to convince the people back home, once and for all. If, for instance, a newspaper would publish his story . . .

The next day, before going home on Christmas leave, Schmidt called up *Das Kleine Volksblatt*, a widely circulated newspaper, and said he could give them an interesting story. A reporter appeared forthwith and on December 22, 1938, the *Volksblatt* published a sensational article, UNUSUAL CAREER OF A VIENNESE LOCKSMITH APPRENTICE. The story contained details that were new even to Schmidt. The silver honor cord has been bestowed by the Führer "only upon three other persons from the East Mark"; Schmidt's new Diesel rail-car was "twice or three times as fast as older models and was already being used in Hungary."

The article caused a terrific sensation in Rampersdorf. Even Peter's father had no further doubts.

When Schmidt returned to his military unit at the end of the Christmas holiday, he was called into

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the battery office. There he found himself facing the battery commander and a dozen junior officers. The captain placed his hand on Schmidt's shoulder.

"My *dear* Schmidt," he said. "We are overwhelmed. Why didn't you tell us before?"

Schmidt remained cautiously standing at attention. Maybe this was just a trap. The captain turned toward his officers. "Just as I told you, gentlemen — he's too modest."

Then Schmidt spied a copy of the *Volksblatt* on the captain's desk. So that was it! "I — I wanted no favors, sir. I want to do my duty like any other soldier."

The captain rubbed his hands in delight. "There you are, gentlemen. The true spirit of the good German soldier! Another proof of the fantastic foresight of our Führer, who singled out this simple *Kanonier* from among millions."

"Heil Hitler!" shouted Schmidt. Everybody clicked heels and saluted.

"At ease!" said the captain. "*Kanonier* Schmidt, what were your duties up to now?"

"I've been shoveling snow," Schmidt said.

There was a moment of embarrassed silence, then the captain cleared his throat. "Well, that's over now. *Kanonier* Schmidt, you are freed of all military duties. You'll have a room for your special work. You may come and go as you please. And you will wear the silver honor cord over your uniform." Schmidt thanked them loftily and marched out.

"I didn't bother even to sleep in the barracks," he said to me. "I stayed at our apartment in Vienna and arrived at the barracks after 8 A.M., like a colonel. When I approached the gate, wearing my silver cord, the sentry would call out the guard of honor, which was done only for the garrison commander and all general officers."

A few weeks later Schmidt was transferred to the Luftgaukommando XVII and assigned to the office of Colonel-General Eduard von Löhr. The general, greeting him like a dear old friend, said he had a special job for him. The German secret service had got hold of certain drawings of foreign aircraft engines. General Löhr wanted Schmidt to study the drawings and point out "parts of specific interest."

"I was frightened to death," Schmidt said to me. "I told the general I knew nothing of aircraft engines, being a rail specialist, but he genially patted my back and introduced me to the colonel in charge of Secret Projects. Then came another blow. The general said a man of my abilities couldn't run around as a private; he was going to make me an officer. Now, promotions to officers were handled by Berlin, and if Göring's Air Ministry started to investigate, the bubble would blow up. I tried to play modest but the general said he had already written a memorandum to the authorities. It was this memorandum that later caused my downfall.

"For a while I was a big man at Luftgaukommando headquarters," Schmidt went on. "I had an elegant office with a sergeant as orderly. I set up a model railroad in this office, and the general, the colonel in charge of Secret Projects, and other high officers came to play with it. After a while I realized that I couldn't go around much longer in my private's uniform with the silver *fourragère*. It was asking for trouble. So I bought some black cloth which was reserved exclusively for the SS and explained my wishes to the regimental tailor. The jacket should be like a diplomat's gala tunic. On the lapels I had embroidered a self-designed emblem with the initials of the Technical University. The silver *fourragère* would remain on the left side although the tailor said he'd never heard of anybody wearing it there. I 'improved' the swastika arm band, wore gala infantry trousers and an Air Force cap. No one except Göring could have designed a more beautiful uniform.

"I was quite frightened when I first faced the general in my operetta costume," Schmidt continued, with a chuckle. "But the poor idiot was fascinated and said I could have his private eight-cylinder Mercedes whenever I needed it. I took the car and drove straight out to Rampersdorf. You should have seen the faces of the people as they stared at the car with the general-staff license plate. When my mother saw me, I could stand it no longer. I told her everything. She cried but I assured her that no one would ever dare harm her or my uncle."

4

THE merry life of *Kanonier* Schmidt came to an end on the morning of February 16, 1939. He had arrived at his office earlier than usual, with somehow a strong foreboding of disaster. At 11 A.M., when he was about to leave, a sergeant asked him to wait. "The general wants to talk to you. You're not supposed to leave."

Presently Schmidt was called into the general's conference room. Behind a long table sat the general, looking flustered, and several high-ranking officers wearing the red facings of military procurators of the Luftwaffe Court. "Tell us how you got that title of engineer," the general said gruffly.

Schmidt was now convinced they didn't know much. "I'm not used to such treatment," he said arrogantly. "Maybe I'd better telephone the Führer. As you know, he gave me his private phone number."

"You talked with the Führer?"

"Certainly!"

"That's not true! The procurators have checked up on you. You are under arrest. We know you are a spy."

"A spy?" Schmidt said, flabbergasted.

"You'd better confess! But we'll find out soon enough."

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Schmidt was taken to the military prison in Floridsdorf, where he was welcomed enthusiastically — his jailers thought he had really pulled a fast one on the big brass. Schmidt didn't share their relish. His first reaction had been relief: after seven long months of playing comedy and confiding in no one, he could relax. But now he was frantic. The penalty for espionage was death. Poor Schmidt was in a fearful dilemma. He couldn't tell them the truth — that he had staged his foolhardy masquerade to save his mother and uncle from the Gestapo. That would have been an admission of his family's anti-Nazi leanings, which was just as bad as spying.

"I decided that the only way to save my neck was to convince the procurators that a silly love affair was behind the whole business. But how? They wouldn't believe me if I made a confession. Then one night my jailer told me that the prisoner in the next cell was going to be released in the morning. I wrote a passionate letter to Elsa: 'I did it all for you, my beloved. Remember when you said what a pity it was that I wasn't an engineer? And now they say I am a spy. How can I make them believe that all I wanted was to impress you, dearly beloved?' "

The letter was smuggled to the prisoner in the next cell, who was to surrender it to the sentry at the gate, saying that he'd been asked to transmit it to Elsa, but didn't want to become an accomplice to this crime.

Everything worked fine. The letter promptly landed on the desk of the chief procurator.

Schmidt is convinced now that the procurator believed it implicitly. One week later, on May 25, Schmidt appeared before the Luftwaffe Court. It was a strange trial. The judges frequently tittered. Even the chief procurator had trouble keeping a straight face as Schmidt told, with his most honest, dumbest face, how he had in vain tried to impress Elsa, whose father "thought she was too good for an ordinary locksmith apprentice." So he had decided to become an engineer. The diploma was unrolled as exhibit A. The presiding judge burst into laughter.

The trial was over in two hours. The indictment of espionage had been dropped. Schmidt was found guilty of "forging an official diploma" (four weeks of prison), of "unjustified use of an academic title" (four weeks), of "insolently exploiting the name of the Führer and Reichskanzler" (four months). In view of the defendant's good conduct, three months of preliminary arrest would be deducted.

"I suppose they had orders from higher up to kill the affair quickly," Schmidt said to me.

When he was released, he returned to the Luftwaffe and served throughout the war as an ordinary soldier. In 1945 he took a job as motorman with the Municipal Streetcar System in Vienna. His career as motorman was terminated on January 3, 1947, when the brakes of his car failed and it collided with another car, killing three people. Although Schmidt was cleared, he was busted to conductor, a job which bores him to tears.

Between jobs, Schmidt finds time to do some serious inventions. His *Lenkdrehgestell* (self-adjusting truck) for streetcars has received an Austrian patent and has been certified by a commission of Vienna's Technical University as "having excellent running features." Schmidt proudly showed me the certificate.

As Schmidt was finishing his story, his wife entered the room with the baby on her arm. "Elfried!" she said. "If we want to catch a little sunshine, we'd better go."

Schmidt got up at once. "Yes, we'd better go," he said, meekly. He pointed at a wedding picture on the wall which showed him wearing his fantasy uniform, with the silver *fourragère*. "We got married in 1940, a year after I got out of the Army prison," he said. "I hated the very sight of this uniform but the Army forced me to wear it for my wedding so that the people in the village wouldn't get suspicious. They didn't know the truth then."

"Anyway, Elsa did marry you, without an engineer's title?" I said, half jokingly. Frau Schmidt gave me a vexed glance and walked out.

There was an uncomfortable pause. Schmidt cleared his throat. "My wife's name is Helene," he said. "I — I didn't marry Elsa. Shall we go?"

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Not since the Brontës has an English family produced three such talented writers as Edith, Sacheverell, and Sir Osbert Sitwell. The story of their home and heritage at Renishaw; the immortal portrait of their father, Sir George Sitwell; the account of their growing up in the Golden Age; the writers and artists who were their friends after the ordeal of the First World War — all this SIR OSBERT SITWELL *has told in the five-volume autobiography which he wrote between 1943 and 1950, a work now humorous, now pensive, and always illuminating.*

MAKING A BOLT FOR IT

Being Some Rejected Pages from an Autobiography

by SIR OSBERT SITWELL

On the 12th of July, 1937, my mother died in a nursing-home in London, and the following August my father left England for Switzerland, and thence, after a month's visit, returned to Montegufoni, his castle in Tuscany. For the long stay he proposed to make there, he had provided himself with some companions, and others we had found for him, in order that he should not be lonely — or rather not more lonely than the complete suit of "armor" he had grown for himself in the past half century, and in which he was now ever encased impenetrably, the visor down, so that he revealed his face only a little less seldom than his hand; no more, then, than this very individual steely envelopment rendered inevitable. In addition, I had told him that I would join him in Italy whenever he wished, but I became aware in talking to him that he was not really eager for me to do so, because he liked to be in a position of absolute command, with nobody to gainsay him, and since I, too, was accustomed to having my own way, this encroached on his prerogative. However, during the course of a few weeks he came to cherish a certain sense of grievance, most carefully nurtured by various of his acquaintances, at his children not being round him, and towards the end of November, some two months after his return to Italy, telegrams were suddenly shot at me from all sides with vigor and poignance. This barbed shower revealed behind the shafts a formidable power of organization. The missiles sped from people young and old, men and women, worldly and unworldly, Italian and English, prelates and laymen, but all united to tell me that my father was very ill and that it had now become my duty to be at his side. I at once took the train for Florence.

On arrival at the Castello I found arranged for my benefit a tableau, a deathbed-scene like one of those that occur in the paintings of the Italian Primitive Masters. My father lay in a four-poster — baroque in style, I must confess, rather than gothic — receiving fruit, fresh eggs, game, and sympathy — but not flowers. These last he rejected outright because they were prone to give him hay-fever. . . . As I entered the room, the figures relaxed and the tableau broke up. My father proceeded to dismiss the guests with a little ceremonial flutter of the hand, and went on to tell me at once of his serious illness, although there was little outward sign of it in his physical state. I therefore asked him to be allowed to talk to his doctor, Giglioli. He gave me his permission, and accordingly I bumped into Florence in the large, heavy motor-car — known locally as the Ark — to interview this sympathetic and most intelligent Italian doctor. When I asked him if my father was very ill, he replied: "The disease which Sir George assumes he has developed, is a matter of X-ray plates and not of faith alone. He is an old man of seventy-seven years of age, and of course if he gets a cold it may always turn to pneumonia: but probably he will outlive me and be with us for another twenty years." (My father did in fact survive his doctor by some five.)

On my return from the city I found my father still in bed, and looking intensely depressed. As I opened the door of his room, he inquired in a drooping voice: "How long does the doctor give me?"

"About twenty years," I replied.

At this, he suddenly jumped out of bed with an agility that would have done credit to a man half his age, and said, "I must dress now." That night he came down to dinner.

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The long journey and change of climate had afflicted me with a bad attack of lumbago, and the next morning I had breakfast in bed, and was therefore rather late in making my appearance. First, from a small room above the Cardinal's Garden, protected from the wind, and full of late November sunlight and of roses and stocks and of drowsy butterflies in the last florid stage before their hibernation, I had observed my father holding court in a deck-chair — or rather in the kind of long wicker-chair that he liked because he could put his feet up and thus rest the heart, and of which one was always reserved for him in any garden that he owned. He reclined on these hard openwork planes of wicker, at the top of a flight of steps commanding the view: the valley of vines, and nearer, climbing the castle hill in steep terraces, the long tank-like stone beds full of blue plumbago, leading up in turn to the surrounding box parterre, in which were growing the flowers he had chosen for it in pale, pastel colors. . . . Round him were grouped the courtiers. . . . There was Signor Bracciaforte, smiling as always, full of childish benevolence, easily moved to tears or laughter. There was a young girl, a student of history, her figure slightly foreshortened by fate and a-clink with the old paste jewelry with which my father delighted to hang it. Her eyes, I noticed, seemed to be perpetually full of tears and she had a sweet smile of sympathy showing from a head hung rather on one side. And then there was my friend Francis Bamford who had kindly offered to accompany my father to Italy and to look after him. (To him my father had in the past year uttered some of his more sudden, startling, and Delphic pieces of advice, such as "Never be kind to a Dowager," and "One can see in my grandchildren how Nature is trying to reproduce *Me!*")

When I got downstairs — with some difficulty — and appeared in the garden under that cloud of awkwardness that always overshadows the latecomer, I said, "Good morning, Father." He greeted me in return and then gave a significant, rather ominous glance at those round him from under eyelids that seemed to work sideways rather than up and down; a signal which the court knew from experience was calculated to convey dismissal. Watching in silence till his guests were out of earshot, he remarked to me in a voice of unusual dignity: "Osbert, I wish to speak to you alone."

I replied somewhat carelessly: "Then I'll get a chair and sit by you. How delicious it is out here, Father! This is the first sun I have seen for months."

To my surprise, for he usually liked to warm himself in the winter sunshine, he answered: "No, I would prefer to speak to you in the Gothic Library."

He proceeded to lead the way to a small, cold, high room on the north side of the house. On the faking of it he had for some years been engaged, spending on the process a very considerable sum of money. It was, of course, a library without books — I say "of course" for it could always be noticed that, though he loved books and lived surrounded by them, none the less in any room which he called a library no single volume was ever to be found. At Scarborough, similarly, his library had been bookless; though each of his several sitting-rooms even had books piled up all over the floor. But this library was, its very appearance proclaimed, a State Apartment, to be used solely for giving audiences and making special pronouncements. No book had ever been brought into it or was ever likely to be, and people, it was plain, as seldom entered it. A recess was lined with cypress-wood cupboards. Too shallow to hold books, they were crowned with a flat, gothic fretting as cornice, and their panels were edged with a margin of leaves, rabbits, and human figures cut in very flat relief, expertly carved.

Below them, attached to their base, were seats that resembled medieval instruments of torture; although, as if in mockery, they were thinly padded in places with flat cushions. Herein and hereon, we sat, the two of us facing each other. We bore our discomfort manfully, pretending not to notice it. I can see my father now, as he sat there, very upright, with the sun through the barred window catching the gold glint of his red but graying beard. He was wearing a gray suit and one hand rested on a cushion. In his manner could be perceived, by one familiar with his ways, both a certain air of tension and a wish to surprise. Thus I was prepared for something portentous — and sure enough it came.

He gave a slight bow and said: "I thought I ought to inform you, Osbert, that Mrs. FitzDudley Gudgeon wishes to marry me."

This unusual announcement winded me. I had seen Mrs. FitzDudley Gudgeon. Without background but with a past, she was a widow of peculiarly unpleasant character, who had for half a century and more trailed behind her a long train of unsavory financial transactions merging into love affairs, and vice versa. . . . She had contrived to cultivate my father's society for some years. Once at a concert at the Queen's Hall, she had come cringing up to me, in the interval, and had said, "I know your father" — to which I had replied, "Yes. Better than I do, I believe."

But most clearly, I remember an earlier occasion on which I had seen her. It was at a party, and I recall it vividly because a friend of mine, much older than myself, who had been standing by my side, had turned to me as she entered the room, and had said: "Here comes the wickedest woman in Europe."

This had naturally focused my attention on the neatly dressed, discreet-looking gray-haired woman who entered. What he said might be true: but hers was, I found out, an unaudacious, flat, mousy,

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moneygrubbing kind of wickedness without any endowment of wit or wits, and lacking in the fun that sometimes attends and makes lively the company of sinners. It demanded a guaranteed sound return, and constituted a real four-per-cent-preference-share brand of evil.

Naturally, I had noticed my father's unusual choice of words. So now I asked him: "Do *you* wish to marry *her?*"

He replied: "I am not certain, but she has written to me to say that she would like to come here for a long stay."

"Well," I inquired, "what will you do if she insists on marrying you, and you still don't want to?"

"Make a bolt for it, I suppose, as I had to once before. . . ."

Recollecting previous conversations with my father, I seized immediately the implications of this gallant reply: because, when I was younger and he had been fond of warning me of the dangers of everyday life, he had often related to me how, when just down from Christ Church, he had arrived to stay in a famous country-house for a ball. The two daughters of his hostess would be great heiresses; but unfortunately, though he liked them, and they, so he claimed, entertained feelings deeper than friendship for him, yet my father disapproved of both the young ladies: for he considered that they were overfond of pleasure, and feared, moreover, that they might like to spend money too freely. Another motive influenced him even more profoundly. He held very strict views on eugenics, and their noses too nearly resembled his own in shape (so he had told me), and this, if he had married either of them, might have tended to accentuate the aquiline profiles of his offspring, and so have deprived his children of the classical mold of feature for which he hoped, and which indeed he was determined to secure for them.

It was difficult to follow precisely what happened. Howbeit, so far as I could make out, on his entering the hall a footman had as usual taken the heavy leather portmanteau with which a man then always traveled — when to his surprise, my father had discovered that the heiress who was his particular friend was waiting for him there as well. Her presence at once convinced him that the young lady expected him immediately to propose to her; indeed, beyond the hall lay a vista of rooms, and at the end of it the conservatory door could be seen open. He had felt it imperative, if his children were to avoid nasal catastrophe, to act at once. Therefore, hastily snatching back his luggage from the footman's arms, he had pelted back down the drive and through the park without offering to anyone a word of explanation or apology, either at the time or subsequently. . . . This — though I may have gathered some of the details incorrectly — I could have no doubt was the first time he had been obliged to "make a bolt for it." . . . But that was nearly sixty years ago, and at the moment I was concerned with stopping the threatened alliance.

To take the most obvious of present difficulties first, plainly he would not be able to run so fast at his present age, while Mrs. FitzDudley Gudgeon was quite capable of running after and catching him! The best way, I concluded, of preventing the marriage was to find for him a rival attraction to Mrs. FitzDudley Gudgeon, because obviously he felt a need for feminine sympathy and of presenting himself in a new light and as a center of interest. What could be done? Fortunately my mind lighted on Mrs. Rippon; a woman of character and humor and formerly a celebrated beauty; a pirate, but kind and audacious, and of quite a different sort. . . . He liked her, and her husband was rumored to be dying. Accordingly I improvised.

"Well, I must admit I always saw a differen future for you," I remarked.

He said: "What do you mean?"

I replied: "After Colonel Rippon's death, I thought Ethel Rippon would marry you."

At this he looked very pleased with himself, and I realized that I had defeated Mrs. FitzDudley Gudgeon's scheme once and for all.

There is little more to add, except that after my father's death, when I returned to Montegufoni at the end of the war, I found among his papers all the correspondence that had passed between him and Mrs. FitzDudley Gudgeon — for he kept and filed copies of letters he wrote, as well as preserving those he received. Just as the letters quoted in the Bardell v. Pickwick Trial were said by Serjeant Buzfuz to have been written in code, so that an order for cutlets and tomatoes "Chops and Tomata Sauce. Yours Pickwick" conveyed the declaration "I love you," so these unusual billets-doux were couched, it was easily to be deduced, in the current technical terms of the English, European, but especially of the American and Canadian Stock Exchanges. The tenderness of Mrs. FitzDudley Gudgeon's requests for information about Abitibi Shares and the prospects of Brazilian Traction, spelled ardent and everlasting devotion for my father and the respect she cherished for his wisdom — still more for his wealth: while his affectionate response to these demonstrations took the form of such phrases as "I hear Beralts may pay a bonus" or "I advise you to stick to Chinese Customs 1882." Alas, I am bound to conclude that the counsel he gave her in his final communication, to avoid further "flutters" and to invest "all her loose money" in Consols, constituted both a reproof and a call to order, equivalent in the language of love which they had evolved for themselves to the words, "Let us part on terms of friendship; I wish to be let alone, and have no intention of marrying you." After that, there came no more letters.

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Chicago has long been interested in the decorative arts as well as in painting and sculpture. A Chicagoan who has been a stimulating force in the art world, DANIEL CATTON RICH, *critic and author, has been Director of the Art Institute of Chicago and its Curator of Painting since 1938. This is the sixth of the* Atlantic's *series on Painting and Sculpture to which connoisseurs, curators, and artists are contributing.*

ROMANTICISM IN CHICAGO

by DANIEL CATTON RICH

ASIDE from the Art Institute and a few well-recognized spots, exhibitions in Chicago are sometimes hard to find. Like the million and one speak-easies during the Capone reign, art activities are apt to be hidden down basement stairs or found "fronting" for something else, most often a theater or restaurant.

Only a few exhibitions are held in galleries as New York or Paris knows such a term — separate establishments dedicated to selling art. The truth is that most contemporary art (and art of all kinds) is hard to sell in Chicago. Wealthy Chicagoans travel New Yorkward and in the leisure and stimulation of a large art market pick up what pleases them. Now and again they come back from Manhattan with a painting by some Chicago artist — an experience which always amazes everyone.

There is even a stereotype that no good art is being done in Chicago, a remark of extreme carelessness. There are many excellent artists in the city, and during the hectic, developing days of the WPA Art Project, Chicago's painting and print-making were perhaps the most vital in the country. But when government subsidy stopped, private patronage made no attempt to fill the void, and many of the most gifted have left for the East or West Coast. The artists who remain or the youngsters on their way up either teach or do penance in commercial art. Between jobs, over week-ends, at the close of working days or at too early dawns, they seize time for their own work. Such a situation, duplicated in nearly all the great American cities, has its inevitable danger to the art resources of the nation. Artists who have already made up their minds to a career which, like few in America, demands a vow of poverty are being increasingly forced into the ambiguous position of Sunday painters, their primary energy drained off to get a bare living, their real profession relegated to "spare time" work.

When exhibited the paintings and sculptures of Chicago artists turn up in foyers of theaters or bars. They are strung down hotel corridors or hang above Eames chairs in some modern furniture store. Snack shops and printers, department stores and dealers in art supplies, night clubs and book nooks, continue month after month to lend space to one-man shows and group exhibits. Much of this springs from genuine sympathy for artists who have little opportunity to show their work. At other times the arrangement is less appealing and becomes a form of publicity, with the exhibit serving as a kind of TV commercial.

Chicago's prodigality with space — a local obsession — never appears more difficult than to a reviewer trying to make the rounds of art events. I have always had sympathy with the Chicago sports-writer who was suddenly told he must take on an art column. "I'm not worried about the art," he was heard to complain to his city editor. "I can always fake the art. But what about the *leg work!*"

Local artists submit their best work to the annual Chicago exhibition at the Art Institute, which comes this year late in May. The fifty-fifth of a long-established series, it brings together some two thousand entries, about 10 per cent of which are finally exhibited. I doubt that there will be much homogeneity in this year's result. Gone are the days of the unified exhibit of the early twenties with everyone painting in the mild Impressionist style, so suitable for overmantels or dining rooms. This was suddenly upset by an intrusion of bold colors and slashing forms, as much the result of Boris Anisfeld's teaching in the Institute School as the acquisition of certain "modern" paintings by the museum. Over the years the national changes have all been rung — but with one difference. Chicago painting has kept to an unrepentant romanticism. Even its most documentary moments of the American scene were lit by a coruscating, gaudy color, as

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exemplified by Aaron Bohrod in the thirties, and figure painting tended, in the work of the powerful Ivan Le Lorraine Albright, to decompose into a world of phosphorescence and mold. Today's Chicago abstraction often contains moody, expressive textures and rich notes of color to collide with the stricter geometry of the Bauhaus tradition as taught by the late Moholy-Nagy and his successor at the Institute of Design, Serge Chermayeff. This year's exhibition will make no limitations as to entrants; students, amateurs, and professionals may all compete. Among them will be some like Caroline Williamson Knox of Indiana, an eighty-year-old exhibitor at Marshall Field's, who will follow the intrepid Grandma Moses leading the aged into a new promised land.

Some Chicagoans will certainly travel the hundred miles south to Urbana to enjoy at the University of Illinois the fourth in a series of annual showings of contemporary American art. During the last decade colleges and universities have been improving their art fare. Staffed by well-trained young art historians and leading American artists-in-residence, they are far from dependent, as they once were, on portfolios of color reproductions or stacks of soporific lantern slides. Many a college student now actually knows what an original looks like, as a result of a continuing exhibition program.

The Illinois program includes music, drama, film, and dance; it has attracted Stravinsky and has produced plays by the most modern authors. The art exhibition has become one of the liveliest reports on native art anywhere in the country. A team of Illinois professors hit America like a well-integrated football play and carry off many of the year's best paintings to show in Urbana. Artists like to be represented there; Illinois publishes a thoughtful catalogue and — more important — buys yearly a generous number of paintings for its own collection.

Frequently written off by the rest of America as the center of isolationism, Chicago as a city presents a strong center pull towards the appreciation of world movements and foreign influences in art. The University of Chicago harbors (along with Thomism and great nuclear physicists from Europe) an organization with the traditional name of the Renaissance Society. Originally under the classical shadow of Lorado Taft and his *bottega* of sculptors on the Midway, it long ago gave up its quiet afternoons with a program on Donatello or "My Recent Trip through the Cathedral Towns" and took off into the dizzy stratosphere of modern art.

About the time that the University officially proved that the word *renaissance* should be pronounced as though it were spelled *renascence*, Eva Watson Schütze, a pupil of Eakins and a pioneer photographer, shook the complacency of the South Side with a series of startling events in art. Negro sculpture and jazz concerts, paintings by Miró and Dali, a Cubist festival, and the first large showing in America by Fernand Léger caused the Gothic trefoils to flutter and the gargoyles on Hull arch to sit up and take notice. Carried on with distinction by Frances Biesel, a Chicago painter, the program of the Renaissance this spring includes an exhibition by the late great Mexican, José Clemente Orozco, who was almost persuaded, a few years back, to decorate the refectory of International House with a series of his overwhelming murals. Arranged with customary care, the present exhibition includes some of Orozco's last prints and drawings, imported from Mexico along with Justino Fernandez, the artist's great friend and best critic.

It is also good news that the Arts Club, closed for several years and living under artificial respiration, has found new quarters and will not only bring its collection of moderns out of moth balls but will resume its program of attracting the most experimental art to Chicago. Spring in Evanston reveals an extensive loan exhibition of twentieth-century European and American painting from Chicago collections, arranged in celebration of Northwestern University's centennial, by the versatile head of its art department, Thomas M. Folds. In addition, a symposium at Northwestern brings speakers and audiences together to consider the place of the arts in contemporary society.

Quite by chance Chicago now has a remarkable opportunity to compare two well-differentiated points of view on contemporary furniture, decorative arts, and art for industry. At the Merchandise Mart may be seen the second annual exhibition of American Good Design, sponsored jointly by the Mart and the Museum of Modern Art. About three hundred pieces of furniture, fabrics, tableware, wallpapers, kitchenware, and lamps have been chosen from American manufacture by a jury composed of Edgar Kaufmann, Jr., director of the exhibit, along with William Friedman of the Walker Art Center of Minneapolis and Hugh Lawson of Carson Pirie Scott & Company of Chicago. The objects chosen have been installed with a fine understanding for display in a setting entirely devoid of affectation by Finn Juhl, the Danish architect and designer.

In contrast is the huge, imported exhibition called *Italy at Work: Her Renaissance in Design Today* at the Art Institute. Consisting of some two thousand objects ranging from costume jewelry to typewriters and including five entire rooms designed by Italy's leading architects and craftsmen, *Italy at Work* is the brain child of Meyric Rogers, Curator of Decorative and Industrial Arts at the Art Institute. Mr. Rogers sensed the tremendous upsurge of creative effort in design which a seemingly exhausted Italy was undergoing, and proceeded to do something about it. Organizing a jury

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of selection including Charles Nagel, Director of the Brooklyn Museum, Walter Dorwin Teague, the well-known industrial designer, and Ramy Alexander of the Italian Compagnia Nazionale Artigiana, these four men traveled over three thousand miles through Italy and visited hundreds of sources for the exhibit.

The showing opened in Brooklyn and will tour eleven other American cities for a period of three years. In a way, *Italy at Work* was made possible through the Marshall Plan. Largely sponsored by ECA, it attempts to interest Americans to buy — and thus help to support the new Italian movement. It will be successful only if Americans respond to the color, vivacity, and invention of the Italians and are able to afford the almost luxury price which tags every object.

Apologists for modern design in the useful arts insist that part of the movement must lie in producing objects at limited costs for a wide public, and they quote figures to prove that good modern furniture is less expensive than well-made reproductions of Sheraton or Hepplewhite. But the cold fact remains that most of the American pieces at the Merchandise Mart, like most of the Italian examples at the Art Institute, are still beyond the range of thousands of young people who, hesitating between "modern" and "traditional," may plump more or less unwillingly for the latter on budgetary grounds. In the United States, limited production and merchandising, and in Italy the craft character of almost every piece, plus transportation and tariffs to this country, continue to slow down widespread acceptance of contemporary furnishings. Nevertheless, recent markets have shown a changing proportion of newer to older styles in household arts, and it may not be long before the efficient, clean-cut, and often sensitive solutions of the American kitchen and bathroom will spread to more public areas of our homes.

There are dramatic and puzzling questions raised by the two exhibits. Contrasts are easily apparent. Most of the material in Good Design consciously reflects, as Mr. Kaufmann has put it in a recent pamphlet published by the Museum of Modern Art, "the mastery of the machine for the service of man." This is essentially a "machine" art, with the virtues of simplicity, exposed structure, and little or no enrichment of form and surface.

Italian design, springing from centuries of loving exploration of known materials and techniques, is still largely a "hand" art, and Italian glass, ceramics, weavings, and embroideries are often rich rather than simple, organic rather than geometric, and delight in intricate, flowing ornament. Made in homes or little shops we would hardly dignify as factories, Italian products come from a different world, the Mediterranean world of sunlight and fantasy.

Italian designers, unlike most American designers, are not trained under the purity of the Northern tradition which springs, in our time, from the reforms of the German Bauhaus. Italians are artists first and only occasionally specialists; they frequently fulfill, as Mr. Rogers has pointed out in his handbook on the exhibition, the Renaissance pattern, and are painters, architects, sculptors, and scene designers at will, turning, with a freedom unknown to Americans, from one problem to another. Even when they reflect, as for example does Carlo Mollino, a sense of the International Style, their chairs and tables develop a freer plantlike form in curious opposition to the machine functionalism alive today.

Another striking difference emerges: American Good Design is apt to be somewhat drab in color. Finn Juhl in arranging his objects at the Merchandise Mart had to pump color into walls and ceilings to keep the exhibit from a monastic dullness. Italians almost roar with color; they use it freely, dashingly — and sometimes overplay it as they do their plant forms, until the object's utility and purpose are swamped in a growth of something which looks like a hectic revival of *art nouveau*.

Italy at Work introduces a number of fascinating new artists to the American public, among them a remarkable potter, Guido Gambone, who adopts the grotesque elements in Etruscan and folk art to use in his brilliant ceramics. Enrico Bernardi revives the old technique of intarsia to his inlaid wood cabinets, but it is an intarsia dependent on the discoveries of the painters De Chirico and Carrà. There is Luigi Martinotti, an enameler who has done an intense series of small Stations of the Cross for the interior of a chapel in the exhibition, and there is a talented woman, Luciana of Rome, who contrives necklaces from shells, pastes, and even tiny corks with an almost Medicean inventiveness. Few of these — and other Italian works — will satisfy all of the "Twelve Precepts of Modern Design" which Mr. Kaufmann has drawn up in his pamphlet. Perhaps, indeed, these objects are not "modern" in his sense at all, but rather "contemporary" in that they express an exuberant revival of older traditions in terms of what actually is going on at this moment. At any rate it is wise, now and then, to examine such rigid definitions as Mr. Kaufmann proposes in terms of present realities. *Italy at Work* definitely challenges the accepted rationale of Good Design by offering a wider approach to the whole problem. One may hope, however, that neither Hollywood nor Grand Rapids will be carried away by the engaging externalities of what in Italy is a sincere and vigorous artistry.

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The Atlantic Serial

"I have always been willing to take risks in order to do the work of story-telling, or even to have the chance of doing it." With these words JOHN MASEFIELD, *who has been poet laureate of England since 1930, looks back across some sixty years to identify with lyric clarity those excitements and discouragements which he encountered as a youth. His elders disapproved of his voracious reading and when, in his second year as a Training-Ship Cadet, he produced a prize essay he was told, "You must not let this be fatal to you. You must get this writing-rubbish out of your head." In this issue Mr. Masefield continues his description of the persons and influences that helped him as a free lance. His autobiography will be published in the near future by Macmillan.*

THE JOY OF STORY-TELLING

Constant Practice and Frequent Mistakes

by JOHN MASEFIELD

10

I WAS in New York City, in the summer of 1895, when I suddenly found that the faculty of mental story-telling had returned to me. I was walking in an uptown part of the East Side when a story suddenly became bright in my mind, in the way that I had known of old, so that I could both tell it and enjoy it. In the glaring sun and roaring avenue I walked in the old joy, that again, as ever, made all other worries nothing.

This resurrection of my inner life was a gladness. New York City, in herself, was a gladness, that romantic, beautiful exciting City, the Queen of all romantic Cities, with such sparkle in her air and in her people. Still, there remained the dire drawbacks, the want of talent for writing, that everyone was so sure of; the ignorance of how to acquire a talent, or, at least, a skill; as well as the frightful ignorance in myself of the things that other men seemed to know as a matter of course. I could not open a newspaper without finding a new ignorance in myself. I said, "Get rid of the ignorance. Find out from some paper what you ought to read and then read it." Probably, this was the exhilarating New York working her miracle in me. Anyhow, I went into Mr. Pratt's bookstore on Sixth Avenue, and bought the first volume of a *Morte d'Arthur*, then issued in the Camelot classics under the editorship of the late Ernest Rhys.

I was then just seventeen. That is a good age at which to begin Arthurian study. In childhood, I had tried some of Tennyson's retellings of Malory, without any success: I was at once enchanted by Malory. I was too young and too ignorant to question what I read. I supposed that these old romances were all retellings of British history or traditions, and that all of them had been founded on fact. In the main, as I supposed, the events, or something like them, had happened, and the people, or somebody like them, had lived, in places that were sometimes known: Amesbury, Winchester, and others. All the story-telling instinct in me was thrilled as I read. This was a story that gave a great significance to many parts of England. This was (as I supposed) our contribution to epic, and a mine from which poets could take their fables forever. Certainly it was something about which my ignorance had to be lessened. I soon added to my books a complete Malory, and a copy of the *Mabinogion*.

Two at least of my later Masters thought that all Englishmen ought to reckon the *Morte d'Arthur* as a holy book. Englishmen have not followed them in this, any more than in other directions. Still, the book remains our nearest approach to a holy book, and to any story-maker the holy book should be the source of sources. Of course, most of

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Malory is translated from the French; but some of the French romance-writers used fables brought to Brittany by refugees from Britain. The foundation of part of the epic must be British. What a foundation it is, for the imagination to work upon, for the story-teller to invent upon, for the romantic dancer to make enchanting and the musician to bring into the heart. To myself, then, it was pure joy: it seemed a British tradition, that had passed into the imagination of the world. I will spare the reader an account of the wild Arthurian tales that were in my imagination for the next few months. As far as I can tell, the only interest that the modern reader has in Malory is in the suggestion that the man was without some of the virtues, in which of course the modern reader is richly endowed.

For rather more than a year, while living in or near New York City, I read great quantities of fiction: not only the then living novelists of America, France, Russia and these islands, but the short-story writers of many American magazines. I came to know a very wide variety of method, much that was then counted excellent in method and matter, and some that I have seen survive through half a century of man's madness.

It is fitting to give thanks to those American and English publishers who made so much fiction possible to the poorest students. A great range of English fiction could be had for fourpence halfpenny a volume. The Americans offered as great a range at five cents a volume (then twopence halfpenny in English money). A year or two later, English publishers issued poets at a penny a volume. Those were reading days.

In a little more than a year after my buying Malory, I gave up this prose reading for the study of poetry. I was soon a lover of three poets for their power of telling tales: Chaucer, for all his methods, Milton for the first and last books of *Paradise Lost*, and D. G. Rossetti for some unforgettable pieces of deep importance to me. Keats and Shelley won me by other qualities of thought and poetical feeling than those of story-telling.

Shortly after the celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, I returned to England and went to London. I had by this time a fair knowledge of the various schools of writers then using English, an intimate knowledge of the work of some of the best living novelists, and a perception that an influence of very great benefit was coming to us from France.

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It is not possible to persuade the living that the late Victorian time was in all intellectual ways immeasurably ahead of any time that has succeeded. To those who had the happiness to be young in it, the time was one of peace, liberty, abundance, and overwhelming intellectual endeavor. Most of the intellectual endeavor was, of course, directed to setting right what was amiss in the society. Some was very rightly directed to the giving of delight, which, in the main, should be the artist's task in all ages. That delight was then certainly being given, by painters, musicians, and writers. It would startle the young of today to know what enormous appetite for thought Victorian London showed; what dozens of papers fostered delight in writing, what pages of comment upon thought came daily, what fervor this or that movement caused, what excellence was being achieved.

Some great Victorians still survived. Swinburne could still be seen by his adorers, at Putney, or in the British Museum. Thomas Hardy making a great resolution, had just turned from prose to the writing of poetry. George Meredith, after long and cruel neglect, was at last being read. All the reactions seemed to be against the ruthless and the realist; and against the decadence that had lately flourished; (itself being a reaction).

Most of the countless papers on sale upon the bookstalls contained work of quality. Books were in enormous abundance and very cheap. There were more bookshops then, than now, and far more places where, at certain times of the week, the booklover might examine bookstalls for treasure, and be pretty sure of finding some. The out-of-fashion is always cheap, and usually much better than the fashion has the wit to think.

In the fever and fervor, myself being ill and not expecting, nor expected to live long, I commenced author, with what hesitancy and uncertainty the young writer will know without my telling.

London is well-stored with museums and art galleries. I turned at once to these for qualities that might help story-telling. There were many book-illustrations, from illuminated manuscripts to the admirable designs in the books and magazines of the day. In the picture galleries were the masterly presentations of scenes from stories, the scene alive in all essentials, exquisite in all detail. I perceived at once that these men were master story-tellers. They knew all the story and made all others feel the importance of their chosen incident. The perfection of the works made me despair, yet made me long to try. In so many of the greater paintings, I found a spirit long since gone from the world, of glory in the teller and welcome in the crowd. I knew that these painters of the early and full Renaissance must have been urged on by their world to do their utmost.

It was then being fatally and foolishly decided by critics that painters ought not to try to tell stories, or display scenes from stories; that is, that they were to abandon the power of doing their utmost with the fables that link life with the worlds of imagination and eternity. The shocking doctrine delighted the half-baked everywhere, and some of the results are now everywhere, on dirty bare walls in public buildings, and mental perversions of various kinds on private walls.

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All that I saw in the picture galleries and in book-illustrations seemed to proceed from a mighty power of narrative, much of it most helpful to a writer, if it made him try to know how the painter had come to his decision, that this or that was the significant scene. Let any writer stand before a painted masterpiece and ask himself "What should I have done, had I tried to paint this fable?"

I went, when I could, to hear music, knowing from the first, that the poet should work with the musician or, indeed, be himself a musician. Sometimes in an orchestral piece, or sonata, I would hear a strain that suggested a story or that would suit a story-teller. I would try to make tales in verse that would go to these strains; but the time was not ripe.

Sometimes (as those were the great days of the music-hall) I would hear at a music-hall a lively tale in verse admirably sung to a tune and enlivened by a chorus. The poetry was not always all that a lover of poetry could desire, but there was no doubt about the success of the method. I used to wonder, if the poet made the tune, or if the singer made both tune and fable. The collaboration, or solitary genius, delighted the time. Often, the song went all over the country, and round the world: some of those tales in verse are now revived, and are again going round the world.

Unfortunately, not being musical, I could not do that kind of thing. I listened, and wished that I could do it: yet knew that I must try something within my limited skills. I was slowly groping towards the kind of thing I could do: I wrote a little verse and a little prose, and read, with greedy fever, what youth then found to read.

12

My masters at that time, in poetry, were Swinburne and Meredith among the living, Rossetti, Matthew Arnold and Robert Browning among the lately dead. To these I would add Edward FitzGerald, whose translation being hard to come by, I copied out for myself.

In prose, the masters were Stendhal, Flaubert, Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, Guy de Maupassant, Prosper Mérimée and Walter Pater.

There was, then, what was called "A precious school," whose prose was picked and filed, written and re-written, till the perfect epithet fitted the essential noun. Flaubert and Pater were the chiefs of this school: the phrases "tact of omission," "tact of exclusion," were much quoted. Much nonsense was of course written in various affected manners by some of the disciples of these masters; but those masters were extraordinary men, in revolt against the commonness of the commercial age. The young who followed them were also in rebellion: and like their masters, loved literature, and sought all ways of perfection. Every young writer must at some time perceive the grace of elegance and the beauty of refinement, and strive for those qualities, both so precious, so hard to win. The time spent in such striving is never wasted. The young writer either learns that he cannot reach such quality, or gathers such quality as he is fit for.

In the first year of my time in London, I began to read William Morris. I was by then fairly well informed about the pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood: I had seen the representative works of the Brothers and their followers; knew the writings of D. G. Rossetti almost by heart, and thought that I perceived something of what he had been to Swinburne, Burne-Jones and Morris.

At that time, Rossetti was much talked of, and always with admiration or adoration. He was the inspirer of our immediate inspirers; tales about him went from mouth to mouth, and always the tales told were as generous as his nature. It is said not to be so now. In the old days men sought the sky for stars; now, too many rake the gutters for gossip. In my young days, Rossetti was only spoken of as a light that lightened his generation and ours, as a genius supreme in one art, eminent in another, noble in protest, glorious in all encouragement, and extraordinary for his knowledge, instinct and understanding. He was said to have read everything, and to have discovered all the genius in it, months or years before anybody else. He knew, like no one of his time, the quality of the Middle Ages, and its worth to the unled or misled welter of a commercial century. Life in my youth, without Rossetti and his three great followers, would have been a sorry thing.

When men have had much influence, they will be decried and despised by a later set of men; that, being the way men have with their benefactors, is happening now. However, I will back the light against darkness any day, and while I can write at all, I will give thanks for those four men.

Rossetti was long since dead, but I could go to stare at his house in Chelsea. Morris was lately dead, and I could go to stare at his house in Hammersmith. Burne-Jones, so soon to die, was still living; often I went to the outside of his studio in Kensington to stare at the slit in the wall through which the pictures went out into the world. Swinburne, one of the early disciples, was as I have said, still active; by going to Putney on a lucky day one could see the wonderful head, so full of generosity and metrical power; see, in the flesh, one whom Rossetti had painted, one who had for a little time even lived with Rossetti. One was still linked to all old Romance.

In reading William Morris, I touched old Romance; his versions of it had profound effects upon me. It was through him, that I first came to know the Icelandic sagas, and to find in them a reality touched with romance that seemed the perfection of story-telling. As far as I could learn, these sagas had been written down in the thirteenth century,

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perhaps after the tales had been in the minds and mouths of story-tellers for over two hundred years. They were written down in a simple age, that respected the tradition, in prose so plain that the events seemed to be happening before the readers' eyes.

They were over-burdened with genealogies, that tended to delay the start of the story proper: these one quickly forgave. One saw that the descendants of those stocks of heroes were the listeners when the tales were told, and the guards of the tradition. What would one give for an Arthurian tradition, so vouched for, so guarded?

For some years, all modern story-telling seemed thin and unreal compared with the sagas. That leisurely setting out of the tale, the ebbing of the tide, and the quiet end, with nothing but the tide-marks left, all these things, put down in writing, yet based, so clearly, on the tales still told by word of mouth, seemed to me the perfection of the art. Good inventions had been added to the great traditions: there were prophetic utterances, dreams, and some appalling ghosts. Poetry was not omitted: there were poems in nearly all the sagas: and though the poetry was of a kind that made Victorian flesh creep, being a Gothic Gongorism, it interested the reader. It was so literary a poetry, so strange a product in a society so given to man-killings and piracies. It was a difficult poetry: it could never have been easy to follow, even to those accustomed to the method; yet quite clearly it had been followed. The poets had sung the songs to their society, and had been listened to with delight. The society must have been much more full of joy in art than any society known to the Victorians. All those who listened to such songs with pleasure must have been used from childhood to all manner of delicate and interesting art, gold-work, smithery, ship-building, wood-working, carving, the making of tools, weapons, sails, clothing, buttons, studs, jewels, oars, buckets: all that life made necessary to them. We Victorians, who came to know the sagas more through William Morris than any other, understood why it was that Iceland meant so much to him.

The sagas with their simple power made the story-telling of the then living story-tellers almost absurd. What was Flaubert, with his labor and richness of language, what was Pater, with his learning and instinct for felicity, to the tellers of the Laxdale or Njala sagas? Flaubert and Pater could give great quality to scenes: but how would either fare, if told by word of mouth to a mixed audience?

That was the question then debated among the young men who read as I read. It was clear to us that "literature" (care for style, search for the right word, feeling for cadence,) might be one of the temptations, might obtrude, might even kill the effect of a story. How could a story-teller marshal his fable and attain the directness of telling that made the sagas so great? The Welsh Triad says, that the three foundations of genius are "Bold design; constant practice; and frequent mistakes." In the practice, the young men began to feel the need of criticism; inspiring criticism, more guidance than judgment.

13

The *Daily Chronicle*, of London, under the editorship of the late H. W. Massingham, and the literary editorship of the late H. W. Nevinson, was possibly the very best of the literary papers of the world. This was no small distinction in that literary time when so many good brains were judging books, and to such good judges there came an output of work so varied and so generous. No lover of writing failed to take the *Daily Chronicle* on the days of its literary pages, for those were the events of the week.

On one such page I read a review by H. W. Nevinson of the *Poems* by the late W. B. Yeats. This review, and the book it praised, had much influence upon my life. Now that I fully perceive the influence, I find it hard to say how little I knew of Mr. Yeats's work when the review appeared. I had read no book by him. I can have known hardly more than a few short poems, and of his prose, I knew only three short stories.

Mr. Yeats's first collection of poems had been printed in 1889. In 1892, he had published the first printed version of *The Countess Kathleen*. In 1894, he published *The Land of Heart's Desire*. In 1895, he published, with many revisions and omissions, these three books together, under the title *Poems*. It was a reprint of this volume which was reviewed by Nevinson. Yeats was then a little over thirty-four years of age.

Nevinson had an exquisite happy skill in quotation. He so quoted from Yeats's book that I could not put the words from my mind. I wondered, too, what the cover could be: the most beautiful modern cover that the reviewer had ever seen. The lines quoted ran in my head: the thought of the cover possessed me.

Soon, I was at a bookshop, looking at the cover. Indeed it is a beautiful cover, dark blue, with a design in gold of a rose upon a cross spilling petals everywhere. Even now, after more than half a century, many copies still show those drifting golden rose-petals in all their glory and beauty.

Ah, when that gold was new, the cover alone seemed well worth the money. What divine poetry book has not seemed worth the money? What lover of poetry would hesitate one instant between daily bread and a book of undying delight?

I have had a good many first, happy, memorable readings: the first finding of Chaucer, of Keats, of Rossetti, of William Morris, of George Du Maurier, of *Marius the Epicurean*, of the 21st and 24th Books

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of the *Iliad*, of the Second Part of *Don Quixote*, of parts of the *Purgatorio*. This first reading of Yeats was to rank with these, and to be marked with a white stone in memory.

My fondness for stories made me turn to the stories, to the chief story, *The Wanderings of Oisin*, about the poet who was had "away" into Fairyland, with the pearl-pale Niamh. The first book gave me delight, the second, rapture: then, suddenly, I turned the page into the third, to the rousing new wonderful measure that I had longed for but had never known. I cannot tell the magical effects of that new measure and the inventions it told; the riding of the water, the sleeping chiefs, the bell-branch, the long sleep, the coming back of the horse, and the tragical return. These inventions may have been in the Irish imagination and in popular tales. Yeats had made them a part of poetry, with all their matchless beauty of phrase and simile, while still only a lad of eighteen or nineteen. Such force and grace of narrative and such power of beauty have seldom come to one so young.

That first reading of *The Wanderings of Oisin* made me Yeats's disciple. The next day I was seeking out all the books that he had published.

It is possible that many places in Scotland and Ireland are shown as the grave of Oisin (formerly written Ossian) or the scene of his disputes with Saint Patrick (latterly written Patraic or Padhraic). I have seen and known only one of these.

Two miles up an Irish glen, below a strange crooked lonely hill, in sight of the sea, and near a rushing salmon-stream, there is a flat of grass in which is a ring of gray, standing stones. The stones mark the site of the burial chamber of a barrow, that has long since been washed away by the southerly gales, that blow in there from the sea. They are pointed out as marking the burial-place of Ossian. Men told me that he lived near them, when he came back after being three hundred years "away"; they showed me a place, nearer the sea, where he disputed with Saint Patrick.

Those who told me these things were old men (Gaelic speakers) who had lived in the glen throughout their lives and remembered the Famine. It is possible that they kept the old tradition. I often visited those standing stones. I used to gaze with awe at the space within the stones where the body or its ashes must have lain, and hope that the hero was "away" once more with Niamh, or back with the Fenians, hunting the stag, "with Bran, Sgeolan, Lomair."

14

A FEW days after my reading of *The Wanderings of Oisin* I was familiar with much of the published work of W. B. Yeats: certainly, with all his books; and these remained, for years, my favorite reading, my ideals and my despair. In a few months, I was privileged to meet him, and marvel (like the rest of us) at the glory of his young maturity. John Synge once said to me, of Yeats, "No one in Ireland knows how big he is." This could never have been strictly true, even when Synge was in England; it was the rough general statement of conversation. Those who knew Yeats at that time may not have known his exact measure, but of the greatness of his glory none could have doubted.

Yeats was a pioneer in the revival of poetical drama; he had both produced and inspired poetical plays in Dublin. Like most poets of the time, he disliked many of the usual methods of speaking verse, and sought for something much nearer to the (Poetical) heart's desire. Latterly, I have wondered how the method that he made public was devised by him. I know that he was frequently in the presence of William Morris. I know that on some occasion, when the talk had turned upon the speaking of verse in theatres, Morris had said that "the verse ought to be chanted." It has lately seemed probable to me that Yeats had heard William Morris read verse, and had been very deeply impressed by Morris's method.

As I came to the scene too late to have the privilege of hearing Morris read, and being curious to know whether that great man and writer had moved Yeats in this direction, I wrote to Sir Sydney Cockerell, to ask how Morris had read poetry, whether he had chanted it. Sir Sydney wrote to me on the 27th February, 1950, as follows:

"I heard Morris read on many occasions, Swinburne only once. They both chanted their verse, but they did not go to such lengths as Yeats, who when 'cantillating' with Florence Farr seemed to me to emphasize the rhythm at the expense of the meaning. Morris's reading was very impressive, and so was Swinburne's. Morris was a fine reader of prose also. He did not chant it."

Morris and Swinburne, then, were both chanters of their verse; they were the two most eminent poets likely to have influenced Yeats in his young manhood. The weight of their influence, if any, I do not know.

I cannot now remember whether Yeats knew Swinburne; he must, I suppose, have met him at odd times. I know that early in our acquaintance, he called at The Pines to consult Mr. Watts-Dunton about some matter. While there, he asked Watts-Dunton, how Mr. Swinburne was. He was told, "Very well. He is now composing a poem. If you open the door, you will hear him."

Yeats opened the door, and heard as it were the murmur of many bees on a hot summer day. This was Mr. Swinburne trying over his measures in a musical chant.

I often heard Yeats's method. It is not easy to describe; it would not be easy to imitate; probably it influenced all who heard it either for or against. It put great (many thought too great) yet always a

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subtle insistence upon the rhythm; it dwelt upon the vowels and the beats. In Lyric, it tended ever towards what seemed like Indian singing; in other measures, towards an almost fierce recitativo. When reading or reciting verse to a friend, he was frequently dissatisfied with the rendering of a line. He would then say, "No No," and would repeat the faulty line with a more delicate rhythm, helping it to perfection with the gestures of his (most strangely beautiful) hands.

He had brought verse-plays of unusual quality to a theatre un-used to the speaking of verse, and almost ignorant of modern verse. He disliked the method then so frequent, of speaking the verse as if it were prose, of ignoring all the quality put with such difficulty into the lines, and destroying every rhythm for the sake of some action, or what used to be called "business." He felt that the time had come to protest against some of the methods then in use, and try one or two other methods more likely to suit poetry when spoken.

Yeats was always a practical reformer; he suggested improvements by showing other methods. So far as I know, his first public attempt to show what might be tried in verse-speaking was at a Lecture in a Hall at Clifford's Inn, in London, in mid-February, 1901. In this Lecture, he said that most modern speakers of verse neglected, or ruined, the poet's rhythms, and that singers of verse often changed the rhythms and made the words unintelligible. All this was put with much charm and fun.

By that Lecture, a great change was wrought in the methods of speaking verse. What Yeats had said about the poet's wishes went home to certain clever heads. He had said, that a poet cares intensely for rhythms, and wishes his rhythms to be stressed. A great school was to remember this, and to use rhythms with lovely power. He had said that a poet chooses words with great care, and cares intensely for the exact understanding of words so chosen. A great school of speech was to remember this. Before many years had passed, I was to be made truly thankful, that I had heard the beginning of a movement that was to mean very much to me.

It is now nearly half a century since the Lecture and its demonstrations were given. In that time, Poetry has returned to the theatre, almost as an inmate and an equal. More than that, listening to poetry has become a daily delight to millions. It may be hard for the people of today to understand either how little poetry was then heard, or how much it was read. Until Yeats spoke, it was very little heard; so little, that many critics condemned the use of words that were spelled as though they did not rhyme. Writers using such words were told that they were using "cockney rhymes" or "ear-rhymes." They would be trounced for rhyming "guest" with "best"; and would have been flayed for rhyming (had they ever dared) "blood" with "mud." But for Pope's proverbial couplet, "guest" would have fared badly. "Blood" however blue, had to rhyme with such words as "good" or "wood" or "hood." It was forbidden to rhyme it with "could" or "would" or "should"; as this was judged to look ill upon the page.

I have mentioned this matter, because, since poetry became more frequently heard in public, owing to improvements in speech, and the return of the habit of listening, due to the improvements, and to the spread of broadcasting, critics (themselves much scarcer) have raised fewer objections to "ear-rhymes." When Yeats first spoke, they raised many.

15

It fell that I was given the chance of helping to borrow and arrange an exhibition of pictures and drawings, mostly by English painters. The design was to give unusual space to the work of what was then the New English Art Club. This work took me from London to many parts of the country: reduced my reading to the few books easily carried with me, and gave me an incentive the more, to try to write, both prose and verse. Among the books that I took were *The Exemplary Novels* of Cervantes, the Letters of Flaubert, George Borrow's *Lavengro*, Coleridge's *Table Talk*, Paul Verlaine's *Choix de Poesies*. The writing that I attempted at that time was so much difficulty faced, and a very little of it solved or overcome. It reminded me of trying to get through a bog, with no known track, no sound footing, nothing but engulfing mud. The effort was continual, the trial never ceased; what I could do easily was done, what I could do with difficulty was attempted; some of what I wrote was printed.

In this task of borrowing and arranging works of art, I met many artists, who had useful advice for a beginning writer. One of the most useful promptings given to me (by three or four men) was, to attempt some considerable work that needed, first, careful planning, into parts, episodes, suspenses, surprises, and so forth, and then, a resolute will, constant, perhaps, for months together, to bring the work to an end. This excellent advice was not fully taken at the time: I had not then the power, nor the will: it was however remembered and often thought of. There came into my head, from dreams or day-dreams, the theme of a foreign conspiracy to overset a tyranny. I worked at this, mentally, for many weeks, whenever I was alone, in train or on the road. At odd times, I have worked at it ever since, but have written little of it, so far. When I found that I could not bring it to an end, I was still sure that the advice had been right. Fully half of all composition must be the act of will. I had taken to reading the novels of Balzac, and had read enough of the great comedy to understand the majesty of its scope.

As it happened, I was, for a long time then, in the daily presence of Rodin's famous bronze head of

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Balzac. I compared my mental frailty and feeble purpose with that fierce head's vitality and determination. I used to say to myself: "Yet even that man was once such a beginner as another. Years must have passed before even that man designed *The Human Comedy*. But, then, what will, what power, to carry the design, volume by volume, wonder by wonder, through the convulsions of two generations."

"Bold design," indeed, as the Triad urged. I was impressed, too, by something that an actor said to me. I had met him at some gathering in London. He had said "I expect that writers are like actors: They find it better to leave nothing to chance; and work out every least little detail." This had surprised me at the time. I had supposed that the faculty of inspiration counted for most in the work of actors and writers alike. "Yes," he said, "and very rightly: but suppose the inspiration is not there, and the actor is on the stage before his audience? He has to fall back on the planned, remembered little detail."

This seemed sound sense. I saw that a most careful planning, spread over a considerable time, so that various moods might correct and improve, was a part of right composition: a very difficult, and therefore very helpful part.

Still, like most of the young, I found the lengthy work beyond my powers: I could do nothing longer than the short story, either in verse or prose.

In wandering much about the country, I came to know some of the remains of Roman Britain, and from these drew certain useful lessons, all of which sent me back to the Triad. To the Roman the first essential of the City, as of any other work of art, had plainly been Bold Design. The City was planned: its ways made straight: its walls made splendid: its public buildings noble: its baths delightful.

> "How different from us,
> Miss Beale and Miss Buss":

how different from myself, who could only write a tale of three thousand words at most.

I saw the ruins of Roman Britain with awe; for they had been the only cities, their ways the only roads, their baths the only baths, in all this land, for how long? Had they an art of story-telling at all comparable with their art of walling? Life must have gone on graciously in those cities until the destroyer came. How little we know, even now, of their centuries of life, and of the darkness that devoured them. The sight of them made me long for a great national determination to come to know all that can still be learned of all those centuries of our story, so that our citizens might have something sure in their minds of a past well worth the memory. A nation's past is the poet's pasture.

It happened that I was present when John Synge's two early plays, *The Shadow of the Glen*, and *Riders to the Sea*, were read aloud to a little company. I knew that Synge had heard the fables of these plays in lonely places in or near Ireland. There was something fresh and new about them: they came out of life; and this could not be said of the plays then most in demand. The Irish were writing this sort of play. I had already seen two or three little plays, less lively than Synge's, done by amateur Irish companies in London. They had been plays about Irish country life and legend, alike unknown to me, and having a newness and a grace, not then to be had in any theatre.

Listening to Synge's plays (both so poignant with his peculiar genius) made me feel what a wealth of fable lay still in the lonely places in England. No one had touched this wealth, so far as I knew. We had not become alive to its presence: we were dead to it: and much of the theatre of that time was dead in consequence. I had already perceived that Ireland was awake to her own wealth: she was all bright with fervor: hardly a village but saw the light and knew the gladness. The thought occurred to some of us younger Englishmen, that some of us might find, in the English country, subjects as moving, fables as lively: possibly, also, amateur actors as talented. The thought had occurred to others, outside our clique: there was a perceptible stir: but as yet (so far as I know) nothing like the fervor presently shown. I do believe that Yeats, Synge and the Irish were the beginners of the movement that followed.

16

At that time I had no inclination whatever towards attempting to write a play. I was busy with other matters quite difficult enough to any beginning writer. I had known an out of the way part of England, had perceived its great, passionate, almost savage secret life, and knew that this was as yet unwritten. I said to myself, "Someone ought to do something over here": but my own instincts were all for the old method of the story.

I knew almost nothing about the theatre, except that I disliked prose plays. I had seen performances of a few of Shakespeare's plays, and had disliked, or detested, the methods mostly used in them, though there were exceptions of genius, that were soon to

> "Scatter the rear of darkness thin."

The bold and wonderful productions of the late William Poel, that pioneer and bringer of blessing, had already given joy.

I had been to some few musical comedies, and thought that these, with their use of song and dance, were the most poetical (and therefore to me the most attractive) works that the modern theatre offered. Still, I might say, that apart from William Poel's work, nothing in the theatre of the day attracted me deeply.

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Having been much in the country throughout one year, I felt acutely the want of a living theatre in the many little towns that had once built and supported one. What theatres existed were showing recent London successes played by touring companies. Most little towns had no theatres whatever, and, what was worse, seemed to feel no need for any. All the life seemed to have gone into the City and our general feeling was that the City was dead (or dead to what we wanted).

Going into a district strange with story, famous for some of its building, and for the memory of its Festival (long since abolished as a nuisance) I had the good fortune to see the late Charles Ashbee produce Ben Jonson's *The New Inn* with the members of the Guild of Handicraft.

It was the first Ben Jonson play that I had seen. There were few Elizabethan revivals in those days. I knew the play, and something of its history, how its first performance in London had come to grief, and how Jonson and his critics had raged at each other. Perhaps no one had revived it since then: nor was it easy to see how it could be revived, but with abundant cutting of what could never have been made alive, and with much grace of acting and speaking in the four chief parts, it came to life with the Guild: some scenes of it I cannot forget.

It occurred to me, then, that little groups like the Guild of Handicraft might well begin such a rekindling of the nation's imagination as was now burning brightly in Ireland. They had talented, eager players, a lively direction, and all about them the scenes of remembered deeds, strange, terrible and romantic. Why should not these deeds become the fables of plays; why should not this feeling for poetry presently create and act those plays, and the little group make the place famous again as a scene of festival?

Not very many months after *The New Inn* performance, the Irish Players made their first memorable visit to London, where they made a stir. Their freshness and fervor made much professional acting seem unreal. They impressed myself deeply: but I was still not interested in the theatre. I was writing short stories, and even slowly groping my way towards a somewhat roomier form.

After a year or two of experiment, I forced myself to try to write longer stories, even full-sized novels, (80,000 words or more) and during these attempts gave up the making of verses almost altogether. The attempt to write upon an ampler scale taught me much of the craft that can be only learned by trial, and gave me an opportunity for doing the things that I most liked in writing, at that time in my life. From my first interest in reading, I had admired the delicate and vivid effects of description put into a few words by a master, sometimes by the simple dodge of making a noun into an adjective, (a Shakespearean way), or giving to the noun of the object the adjective of scene or season, (a Miltonic way). Someone had quoted to me a remark of William Morris: "Chaucer and Keats are my Masters: they make pictures." Morris had given me dozens of examples of pictures of the kind; Stevenson, Walt Whitman, and certain old memoir writers, had given me others. Often, I tried to do something of the sort; often the attempt was delightful to myself at the moment.

17

What young writers need most is a fellowship or group. In Paris, where Café life is frequent and delightful, the groups form easily, and usually hold together long enough to publish some statement of aim or theory, often stimulating and interesting, with examples. The groups meet at particular Cafés, for the endless discussions of art: if a writer should feel that one group lack the truth, the group next door may have it. In the London of my day, Café life was less frequent, though I saw something of what there was in half a dozen Cafés. The kindling thing to me, in my youth, was the Irish Literary Movement. I often met some of the members of that movement; their work was familiar to me. From studying their dramatic work, it slowly dawned upon me that no writer can neglect any great form of writing: he must practice it, acquire some skill in it, or fail, to some extent, as an artist. All ways of writing are a part of his technique; this difficult way, of the theatre, was, surely, a most precious way, to any young writer, since it offered to him that criticism of the living audience, so sure, so salutary, so swift. I determined to try to learn something of the technique, though I had no instinct for it, and almost no knowledge of it. I was a story-teller, fond of reading old poetical plays, and convinced that only William Poel knew how to produce them.

I learned at once, and with indignation, that all my love of language, fondness for effects of style, worship of the right word, all the old dear tricks, must be cut from my attempts. It was rubbed into me, by those from whom I sought instruction, that a good mime needs no words, and that a good playwright can do without them. What a blow to a youth delighting in words, worshipping the cunning use of words, to find that, on the stage, dumb-show may be more telling than eloquence. Still, the blow told: I began to understand thrift and condensation: the merits of the method shone forth. An actor bade me prepare my framework as a succession of actions and situations without one spoken word. This was wise advice, whatever it may have seemed at the time.

Another actor gave me a still more effective lesson. He said: "Most actors would agree that a playwright has not done his work *if the actor leaves the stage unexhausted, in body, mind and soul.*" This remark gave me light upon some Shakespearean

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problems. Asking why certain plays of the Elizabethans, offering wonderful parts for men, were not revived, I was told that these parts needed "Fifth-Act Actors," that these men were always rare, and tended to prefer (of course) the work of their own time. The Fifth-Act Actor, my friend explained, is one who can be charming, attractive, startling and surprising through the fortunes of four acts, and yet be shattering and triumphant in the fifth. The powers necessary for this are rare; even the physical strength for it is, and must be, unusual. I began to ponder on the men who created the great Shakespearean parts. I determined to try to learn rather more of the theatre, that I might the better understand the miracle of Shakespeare, and the still unsolved uncomprehended miracle of the theatre of his time.

I made myself a model stage, for which I painted stage-settings: I produced plays upon it with little dolls fixed to stands. In spite of the difficulty, I wanted to try something longer than a one-act play, something that would give me room to show various sides in my chief characters, while keeping to the unities, those helps to the playwright, the only helps the ignorant beginner has. This was tried in due course, in the intervals of much other work, and the writing of many stories, short and long.

Occasional performances of what I had done confirmed my knowledge that I had no skill in the theatre, that I was, in the main, a story-teller: but I had now been made aware of the extraordinary power and effect of the Messenger Speeches in Greek plays. These marvels of story make a part of the fabric of most good Greek plays, and come with supreme glory at critical moments.

All theatre-goers now must have watched for the entrance of the breathless Messenger, who knows the result, who has the news, yet cannot at once tell, cannot, in fact, gratify any suspense till it has been made almost unbearable. Now, those Messengers are known: then, they were only beginning to be known, through the performances of the translations of Professor Gilbert Murray. For the first year or so, some actors were afraid of them: they were "story-telling on the stage." They soon learned what opportunities a Messenger Speech gave to anyone who had any sense. Each Messenger at once has all the attention that has been artfully prepared for him, during the preceding hour or so. He enters upon a stilled house, in which few even dare to cough. He finds a sort of malleable mind in front of him that he can play with as he will. A very few years after the first of these Greek plays in London, an actor said to me "No one has ever known a Greek Messenger Speech to fail: they are always wild successes."

I made my Messenger Speeches in due time, and learned from them still more of my defects, not only as playwright but as story-teller. The defects were made more than clear, they were made painful. Still, I was not made to feel that my time had been wasted. I learned a little from each failure.

I was under no illusion about the mistakes. I knew that I had not any instinct for that kind of writing; but in the press of almost every other kind of writing, these attempts at plays were rests and amusements. I could pull out my model stage with the little dolls and work at a scene, as if it were not really work at all, but a play. In some of my imagined scenes I had not dolls enough, and had to use chess-men as supers. Sometimes in my zeal I "produced" a Shakespeare, or Corneille or Racine scene upon this model. I began the useful habit of reading plays with an imaginary performance, sets, actors and appropriate business, in my head. In this way I began to grope into an understanding of the Elizabethan theatrical method, and thereby to become less and less satisfied with prose plays of any kind.

I had seen the Christmas Mummers, with their Saint George and Dr. Vinney, in my very early childhood. The chance view of some Sword Dances suddenly poignantly recalled these to me; indeed, they did more, they made all the art of the early twentieth century seem tame and dead. I wondered as I watched them, whether I were looking at what had once thrilled thousands in the Rings at Avebury or on the great downland near the White Horse. The Mummers' Play and the Sword Dances seemed to come from the childhood of man, from races with beliefs now lost, that had once been passionate joy.

For nearly a year I worked upon a theme that would show forth these beliefs suddenly returning here. It seemed that the beliefs were eternal, born into men, but sometimes hidden by later customs. Might not that old elemental joy be revealed again, and man be happy in his arts, while exulting in his strength? Alas, joy was soon to be banished from the world, the arts killed or misused by politicians, and the strength of nations wasted in wars.

18

During the study of the theatre, which made my amusement for some years, I ceased to care so much as formerly for the French story-writers. I began to read Spanish story-writers, more especially the historian of the Conquest of Mexico (Bernal Díaz del Castillo), the old poetical romances, the works of Bécquer and a good little collection of Spanish poetry. I then began to read *Don Quixote*, that until then had seemed meaningless. For the next few years this was my favorite book: I carried it with me wherever I went: it was the one triumph (so I thought) of Renaissance story-telling, and the one consolation in a very real blackness of despair.

On a Sunday morning in that blackness of despair I set out upon a memorable walk in a late April, after a winter of much ill-health and disappointment. Being alone in the country for the week-end

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I went away through some woodland, in parts that I had never before seen, and have never seen since. It was a sad walk, for my work was not what I had hoped, and on my way into the country a fact had come to my knowledge that filled my mind with bitterness. The prospect before me seemed black.

Seeing a likely ash-plant in a pile of hedge-trimmings, I took it, and trimmed some five feet of it, with a knife, to be my walking-staff. The day was sunny and fine, but it had been a cold and snowy April. On my walk, I came to a hollow on the northern side of a hedge (it was more than a ditch: it looked like an overgrown shallow quarry). It was still full of dirty unmelted snow-drift, for no sun could reach it and rain had not fallen since the snow. I probed the snow with my staff, and found it to be, roughly, three feet four inches deep; not a bad record for late April; not a cheerful sight, but one well according with my mood.

Presently, on my return journey, being then on the southern side of that hedge, I found the bank starred with primroses. They were the first that I had seen for a year, and in any case would have given me delight; but as I looked at them a voice within me, that I did not know (a man's voice) said clearly "The Spring is beginning."

I walked home, feeling that the difficulties that beset me in what I was then trying to write would now clear away. I had no doubt of this: a message of hope had been given to me.

However, the difficulties did not clear away, the work seemed in a tangle, and not to be cleared by any effort of mine. I took it with me into another part of the country, where I stayed alone, working and worrying for a few days, finding no light upon it, yet sure that the promised light would come.

In an evening in May, having written myself weary, I went out for a walk through woodland, then in all the beauty of young leaf and life. I was in a state of great inner joy from a sight that I had seen that morning. I came home uphill through a wood, feeling that the incredible and the impossible were on each side of me. At the wood's edge there was a sort of fence to shut it from the common beyond. The fence was something to step over with the feet, and easily to push through with the body. As I went over and through this division, I said to myself "Now I will make a poem about a blackguard who becomes converted." Instantly the poem appeared to me in its complete form, with every detail distinct; the opening lines poured out upon the page as fast as I could write them down. I had written between 14 and 20 lines before I reached home. I then lit the lamp and sat down to write, till I had done some 60 odd lines more.

I was alone in the house. It was not a very lonely house: there were two other little houses one about thirty, the other sixty yards away. However, it was deep country, nearly midnight, and everybody near me must have been abed and asleep.

Suddenly, as I wrote, the door of the room in which I wrote flung itself noisily wide open.

Do not think that I was scared: no, no; I was terrified, almost out of my wits.

Why the door had opened in that way, I do not know. It had never opened like that before, and never did again. The hint was not lost upon me: I packed up my writing and went to bed.

In three weeks and three days I had finished my tale in verse of the blackguard who was converted. I then joined some friends in the North, and went with them to Capel Curig, where they were hoping to fish. They angled, with what seemed to me much skill and unusual patience for a day or two, without getting a bite. It then began to rain, in the gentle south-easterly drizzle that foretells a deep depression. After a time the drizzle changed and deepened; rain poured down in a steady veil. It was impossible to go out in such rain without getting wet through in thirty yards. The fishermen went to the lounge: I went to my room, looked at the rain falling, heard the glad noise of many waters, and set about some writing.

I said to myself that I had written about a violent man who had been made happy for no apparent reason; but that that was only half of the picture: the opposite case must also be stated; I must show a quiet woman made heart-broken for no apparent reason. Instantly, as before, the fable came into my mind, complete, distinct in all its details: I had only to pull it down, as it were, from where it stood, onto the paper. Beginning thus during the downpour at Capel Curig, and continuing and ending in the sun elsewhere, I wrote this tale in three weeks and three days.

The voice that had said "The Spring is beginning" had told the truth: the Spring had come. The work in which I had been floundering, unable to see my way, was given up. I made a slight use of some of it about ten years later; the rest either moulders, or is burned.

Since then, I have known that by instinct and aptitude I am a story-teller, though now and then, even after all this, I have tried a dramatic scene or two (or three), as a change of method, or as an experiment.

(*The End*)

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THE ATLANTIC Bookshelf

THE *Peripatetic Reviewer*

BY

EDWARD WEEKS

A GOOD many changes have occurred in the American newspaper since 1900, and some of them are as familiar as the invention of the electric light bulb. Let me enumerate them very briefly.

The first and most irresistible change is the tendency toward bigness and consolidation. Forty per cent of the American newspapers in existence in 1929 have either closed up shop or have been consolidated into a newspaper chain, and the end of this process is not yet in sight. Ten years from now, one can predict with regretful certainty, there will be still fewer newspapers, still less competition among newspapers, and those which survive will have even bigger circulations.

The second change flows out of the first. The more newspapers are consolidated, the more uniformity you are bound to have in point of view, in content, and in appearance.

The third change is the loss of power of the editorial page, and the increased employment of columnists who with their differing points of view compete to fill that vacuum.

A fourth and certainly a major change is the wide use of syndicated material and the increasing power of the wire services. This has resulted in less individual newsgathering by the big metropolitan dailies. The *Chicago Daily News* is this month closing up its London office. The *Christian Science Monitor* is the only one of the profitable newspapers in Boston to maintain a Washington bureau today.

A fifth change is the general acceptance of the news handout, and the carefully controlled mass press interview as a prime basis of newsgathering. It is the lazy way of dishing up what you are expected to print, but I think we all sometimes wonder if it is the clearest way to the truth.

A sixth change is this: no matter how large the headlines may be, news stories and extras will never be as urgent as they were in 1900. Radio and television will always beat the press with the spot flash.

There have been a multitude of other changes in terms of popularity. Think of the enormous pull of the sports page, and of how the sports page has grown. Think also of how many people turn first to the comic strips. Do you know what a single, widely syndicated comic strip now earns for its artist? $250,000 a year. Again, think of the never ending speeches that have to be quoted and commented on today; yet when Lincoln was President, the Gettysburg Address was, I think, the only speech he made away from Washington.

Teddy Roosevelt discovered the emphasis of the Monday morning release; and I guess it was the Hearst papers which discovered that if you use banner heads day after day, as they did to alert us for the invasion of Europe in 1944, you eventually run out of words. When at last our troops hit Omaha Beach, you may remember that the Hearst papers were reduced to this simple headline: "THIS IS IT."

Finally, there is the change which is still in progress, and still meeting with resistance — I mean the unionization of the editorial staff, a movement which the late Heywood Broun initiated in New York. I believe that history will regard this both as important and as progress.

A single example will show why I think this development was inevitable. In the final ten years of the *Boston Transcript*, the paper lost many millions. Even in "good" years it was running a loss of $1000 a day. The one reason — above all other reasons — why the *Transcript* was unable to survive was the abrupt ending of its financial advertising in 1930. It was an interesting revenue situation, in which the paper was deriving almost its sole support from the advertising of new securities issues. The business paid so well and was so easy to get that other advertising revenues, and important circulation problems, were more or less neglected. When its financial advertising dried up, there was simply nothing left.

In the lean years that followed, the editorial and news staff of the *Transcript* took one big pay cut after another: a single cut of forty per cent across the board on one occasion, a twenty per cent, and several tens. Men worked for whatever they could squeeze out of the arrangement, and a $35 a week salary was big money. But while all this was going on, the typographical unions took no pay cuts whatever, and there was not a single per-

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son in the whole news and editorial department, at one stage, who was getting as much money as the linotypers, and this included the editor of the paper. The wonder is not that the staff tried to protect itself by organizing, but that it waited so long before doing it.

The Round Table

I miss something else in the journalism of today, something which was gay and spontaneous. I mean the exciting, effervescent enthusiasm of the 1920s. I remember once seeing Bob Benchley, Aleck Woollcott, Heywood Broun, and Robert Sherwood walking together along 44th Street toward Fifth Avenue. Presumably they had been lunching together at the Round Table and were now on their leisurely way to work. "There," said my friend, "goes the venerable body of criticism." He was right. Those four could do more for the success of a book or a play or a film than any reviewers I can think of today. The times were serene; they wrote with gusto of what they liked and with equal devastation of what they didn't.

It might be added that they were more successful with their likes than with their dislikes. When Woollcott went "quietly mad" over James Hilton's *Lost Horizon*, the novel, which up to then had sold less than 5000 copies, went onto the best-seller list. So did *Mr. Chips*. But when Benchley did his best to squelch *Abie's Irish Rose* he got exactly nowhere. The play ran for six years, and throughout that period Benchley's brief comments in *Life* held these nosegays: "Just about as low as good, clean fun can get"; "Where do the people come from who keep this going? You don't see them out in the daytime"; "A year old this week, in spite of all we could do."

This "body of criticism," together with F.P.A., the two Pembertons, Harold Ross, Peggy Wood and her husband John V. A. Weaver, Marc Connelly, Jane Grant and Ruth Hale, George and Bea Kaufman, Neysa McMein, and Dorothy Parker, formed the habit of lunching together at the Algonquin. Frank Case, who ran the hotel, reserved for them a large table toward the rear. Out of this at first casual but soon regular meeting place came the Vicious Circle and later its sporting annex, the Thanatopsis Literary and Inside Straight Club, a poker game which began on Saturday afternoon and often ran straight through Sunday. The stakes were so high that Johnny Weaver, who had long begged to play, lost the entire royalties of his book *In American* in a single evening. And when someone had made a foolish play it was customary for the other players to stand up and, to the tune of Gilbert and Sullivan's "He Remains an Englishman," solemnly warble, "He rema-AINS a goddam fool." All this and other details (which I shall be quoting for some days) have been garnered from **Margaret Case Harriman's** entertaining volume, ***The Vicious Circle*** (Rinehart, $3.00), which Al Hirschfeld has illustrated and which I have read with nostalgia, some familiarity, and almost continuous chuckles.

How to find water

The use of the divining rod goes back centuries. Scientists scoff; skeptics cry "hokum," "superstition," "delusion"; but thousands believe that in the hands of certain sensitive individuals a forked stick will turn downward, sometimes violently enough to break, when the dowser walks over underground water. Geologists explain the phenomenon by saying that if you dig far enough you are bound to hit the water table. Psychologists attribute the motion of the stick to subconscious muscular contractions in the dowser. Physicists suggest that water dowsers may be human radio sets that pick up electromagnetic waves and fields of force. Despite all the unbelievers, **Kenneth Roberts** is sure that in the hands of a skilled dowser the rod is invariably accurate. He does not know why or how the rod works, but he knows that it does; and in ***Henry Gross and His Dowsing Rod*** (Doubleday, $3.00) he gives a documented account of the fantastic success of his game warden friend from Biddeford, Maine.

Henry Gross first discovered that he could find water at the age of twelve. The school he went to in North Salem, New Hampshire, needed a well, and Henry offered to help the school committee find a good spot. The diggers were skeptical but humored the boy, and sure enough, they hit water just where Henry said they would. When Henry was eighteen he moved to Biddeford. Word got around that his rod worked pretty well, and by the time he had been a game warden for ten years, he had dowsed hundreds of wells throughout southern Maine.

In the summer of 1947 when the forest fires were sweeping down from the north in the midst of a severe drought, Kenneth Roberts asked Henry to help him find a water supply sufficient to enable him to fight the fire when it hit his Kennebunkport farm. Over the next two years Roberts followed the development of Henry's skill with increasing interest. Henry could tell you not only where to dig for water, but how deep you had to dig, and how much water your well would produce. And he was always right. From Biddeford, in 1949, he found a permanent, unlimited water supply in Bermuda, while geologists steadfastly maintained that there was no uncontaminated fresh water anywhere on the island; from Bermuda he located water in Vermont; from Roberts's Kennebunkport home he dowsed for water on the Isle of Capri. "What difference does it make *why* the rod works as it does?" Roberts asks. "It does work, and it's high time that scientists accepted that fact and put it to proper use."

The detective-story technique makes this a

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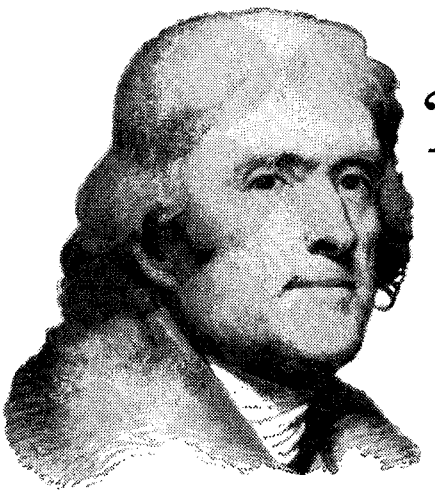

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frustrating book at times, and I think Roberts is unnecessarily testy about what he calls the Closed Mind. But even so, Henry Gross's incredible adventures with the dowsing rod are exciting reading, and Kenneth Roberts has made them wonderfully persuasive.

The romantic vein

Ireland, that oasis of delightful country living, is the scene of **James Reynolds's** romantic novel, ***The Grand Wide Way*** (Creative Age Press, $3.00). The author calls it a happy novel about happy people and so it is. Back from India where he has been playing polo and gathering materials for his first book comes Johnny Lassitter, a six-foot bachelor in his late twenties. Glanoran, his grandmother's lovely house in Connaught, is his beacon and he returns to a life of horses, hunt balls, giddy servants, tinkers, and gypsies, to the wise guidance of his grandmother, and to the love of pretty Honor Bellcastle. He is in love with Honor in a week; they picnic, buy tweed for their trousseaus and horses for their fun, go to steeplechases and dances — it is like a happy ballet, with never a thought of war.

Mr. Reynolds is a master architect of these Irish country places. He brings them alive. His book is full of Irish humor, informed with affection, and musical with a dialect which makes English conversation seem stiff and mannered in comparison. The plot has little propulsion; it is the characters who draw you forward: the snoopy, kindly, ruddy butler, Tomas; the wicked little cairn terrier Bridgie, who throws things into the sea; the heavenly twins Mark and Maeve; the beautiful steeplechaser, Accolade; Kitty, Honor's trull of a sister; and, dominating the story, Mrs. Gillshandon, Johnny's grandmother.

Jenkins' Ear (Macmillan, $3.50) is an elaborate and leisurely historical novel cast in the eighteenth-century style by **Odell and Willard Shepard.** The story comes to us in the form of an extended letter-chronicle from Horace Walpole to his intimate friend, the Reverend William Cole, and it tells of the people and events which took Strawberry Hill by surprise during a week in October, 1755. "Horry" is entertaining his friend John Chute, the keen, elderly Whig, his cousin General Conway, George Selwyn, the clubman and wit, and Kitty Clive, the actress, when suddenly their circle is disturbed by the appearance of some strange horsemen and a mysterious Parson Blandison who imposes himself on the party with dark hints that he is the Young Pretender. Blandison and his boys stay for a week telling many adventurous tales about the War of Jenkins' Ear, and Horry, as he listens, wonders if all this is real and treason. So do I. I think the story, which has much of natural vigor, is handicapped by a lack of direction and slowed by the too self-conscious mannerisms of the narrator.

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THE PERFECT CONDUCTOR ***by Frederick Goldbeck.*** (Pellegrini & Cudahy, $3.50.) A lucid and pleasantly written treatise on "listening to music with your eye," or how to appreciate conductors.

HIS EYE IS ON THE SPARROW ***by Ethel Waters with Charles Samuels.*** (Doubleday, $3.00.) The compassionate and powerful autobiography of a great American artist, who started as a blues singer in the Rinkydinks at $25 a week, and rose to be the highest-paid star on Broadway.

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Reader's Choice

BY

CHARLES J. ROLO

THE American Abroad — the subject of a long line of novels stretching from *The Marble Faun* to *The Ambassadors* and *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone* — is now the subject of two more: ***World So Wide*** (Random House, $3.00), the last book completed by **Sinclair Lewis** before his death, and ***The Nice American*** (Creative Age, $3.00), a first novel by **Gerald Sykes.**

Messrs. Lewis and Sykes are dealing with an area of American experience in which there have been significant changes since Henry James's day, and particularly since the Second World War. "Mr. James's simple miss," writes Lewis, "has become the young lady at the Ritz Bar, and his young suitor, apologetic for having been reared in the rustic innocence of Harvard instead of the Byzantine courtliness of . . . Oxford, has been replaced by the American flying Major, who . . . is used to being courted as the new Milord." This apt observation of Lewis's, which might serve as a preface to Gerald Sykes's novel, is scarcely reflected in his own. Though *World So Wide* is set in 1950, I had the impression of being back in the era of George Babbitt and Sam Dodsworth.

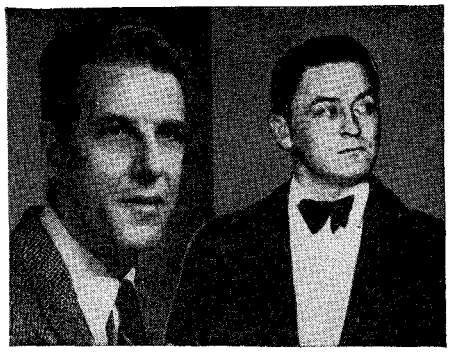
Lewis's hero, Haydon Chart, a successful architect of Newlife, Colorado, is a product of babbittry, but with deviationist tendencies. At thirty-five he feels deeply dissatisfied with the philistinism of his home town, and, when his wife is killed in a motor accident, he decides to go abroad to find out how "to be a self-respecting human being, and even learn to read." He settles down in a *pensione* in Florence; zealously devotes himself to imbibing culture; and quickly falls in love with a young lady Professor from Winnemac, U.S.A., a haughty, olive-skinned beauty, with "the looks of a Latin Principessa" and a stern dedication to dry-as-dust research.

No sooner has Haydon's humble courtship softened this improbable creature than complications arise in the form of a wildly improbable charlatan, Lorenzo Lundsgard, Ph.D. This Lorenzo is a Hollywood actor turned college professor overnight; now, with imposing backing, he is gathering material for a movie and a lecture campaign that will "sell" Culture to the American masses, and along with Culture a strong dose of authoritarian ideas. A hectic climax is precipitated by the arrival of Roxanna Eldritch, a girl reporter for the Newlife *Evening Telescope*, who, though she realizes that "there is something great" for Americans in Europe, rather enjoys behaving like Mark Twain's bumptious rustic abroad. Roxanna brings home to Haydon that his heart and talents belong to Newlife. But Europe has given him the enrichment he was seeking, and he is able to go home fortified against Newlife's materialism. The Innocent has been "civilized" without losing his American virtue.

It is disagreeable to speak tartly of the last work of a novelist such as Sinclair Lewis, but I cannot do otherwise without hypocrisy. *World So Wide* seems to me an egregiously ingenuous story. It has a certain amount of bounce and is moderately amusing in part, but as a whole it is unconvincing and embarrassingly earnest about what have long been portentous commonplaces — a comedy belonging to another era and dateline 1950.

Today, the story of the decent boob seeking a smattering of cultural grace amid the pitfalls of European snobbery seems a stale joke in the folklore of tourism. The traditional drama of American "innocence" and European "experience," in its most pertinent contemporary context, is the story of men such as Gerald Sykes's far-from-innocent Colonel Childress, one of the new Milords; it is a drama of inexperience in the face of stunning new responsibilities. What the "Innocent" has to learn, Mr. Sykes perceives, is "to be imperial" without being imperialist. And whereas a gentle cultural workout may suffice a Haydon Chart as a specific against babbittry, Harlan Childress understands that the new situation of the American calls for a tough, far-reaching struggle for maturity.

This struggle is reflected in the intellectual questionings and the emotional problems of Sykes's "nice American" in the Algiers of 1945. Mr. Sykes is a keen thinker and a mature man, and his book has many good things in it — suggestive reflections; crisp observation; a wonderful



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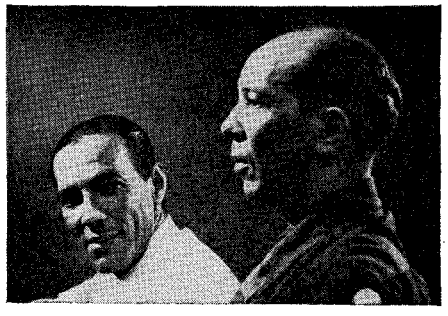

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account of a trip through the Kasbah; an original, subtly shaded characterization of a reactionary Senator. But *The Nice American* falls short of being impressive as a work of fiction. The action and most of the characters show signs of being too deliberately fashioned and manipulated to illustrate a body of ideas.

The war has caused Harlan Childress to think searchingly about his country's values and his personal aims, and he has been deeply influenced by three men: an aging Moslem, a British Intelligence Officer, and a Frenchman who has survived Buchenwald. Childress's immediate dilemma, on the eve of his return to civilian life, is whether to marry the fine-grained, aristocratic Frenchwoman who has been his mistress, or to attempt a fresh start with his ex-wife, Mollie, a high-powered, glamorous career girl, now in the American Red Cross, whose success-mania previously wrecked their marriage. A further uncertainty is whether he should go back to engineering or throw up security and indulge his passion for photography.

Though "right" enough symbolically, the windup has the flavor of a boy-gets-hard-to-get-girl climax in the slicks. In fictionalizing his ideas, Mr. Sykes, far from giving them greater density, has sometimes thinned them down into clichés. I must add, however, that I found *The Nice American* more interesting than a good many more successfully executed novels. Mr. Sykes really has something worth while to say.

The ways of love

The Americans in ***Finistère*** (Farrar, Straus and Young, $3.00), a novel by **Fritz Peters,** are also abroad, but in this case their being Americans abroad is not the issue: the story has to do with the effects of divorce on a sensitive adolescent. Every schoolboy has heard, nowadays, that the wages of divorce is neurosis, where sensitive adolescents are involved; and every reviewer has learned that this is an ideal subject for a depressing little essay in amateur depth-psychology disguised as a depressing little novel. But Mr. Peters, I feel, has wrested a pretty creditable work of fiction from the emotional turmoil of the wounded adolescent. It is not, to my mind, as original or as powerful a book as the author's first novel, *The World Next Door*, the story of a patient in a veterans' hospital. But it is

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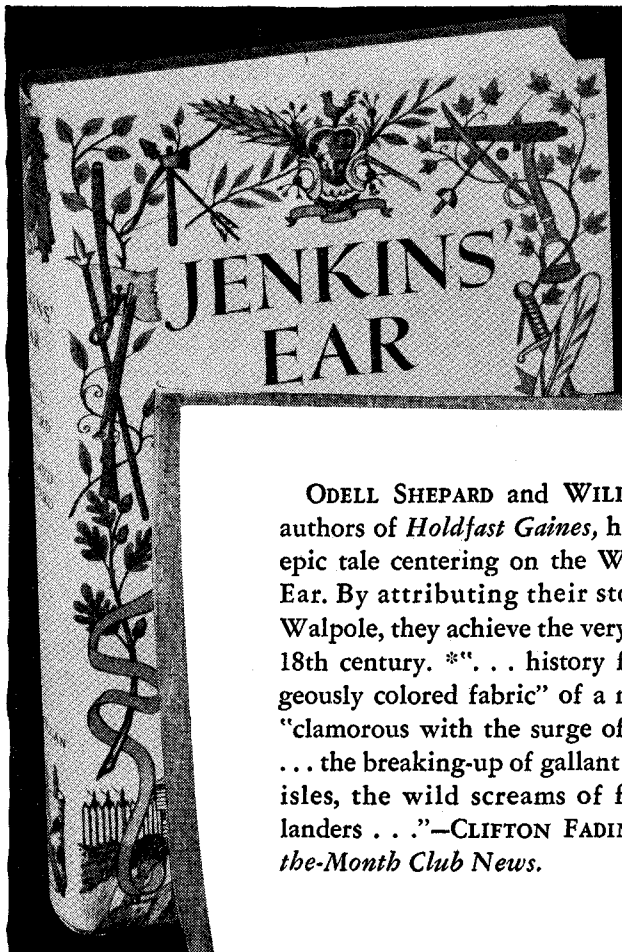
further evidence that Mr. Peters is a solidly talented writer. (The secondary characters here, in particular, are very skillfully portrayed.)

The mainspring of *Finistère* is the loneliness, the hunger for companionship and burning need to love, of a fifteen-year-old boy, the son of divorced parents. Matthew Cameron's mother settles in France after the breakup of her marriage and sends Matthew to a French school. Shortly afterward, she marries a saturnine Frenchman, whom Matthew does not get along with. Catherine herself, a rich, attractive woman of the world, tries to do the right things for her son, but she has not the emotional capacity to understand his feelings.

Matthew is deeply wounded when his one great friend in Paris, an older American, becomes engaged and has little time to spend with him. Back at school, he semiconsciously tries to drown himself. He is rescued and treated with affection by the games instructor, Michel Garnier, a man of thirty who has struggled unsuccessfully with homosexuality; and Matthew falls desperately in love with him. This homosexual love affair — to Matthew, innocent, idealistic, and ecstatically satisfying; on the part of Garnier, guilty, apprehensive, but wildly passionate — is the core of Mr. Peters's novel. Matthew, wholly absorbed in the strange experience of happiness, is childishly heedless of Garnier's warnings that in the eyes of the world their love is ugly and perverted; and the story moves forward, with the sense of a trap closing, toward inevitable tragedy. Mr. Peters has handled a difficult theme with dignity, persuasive insight, and compassion.

The vagaries of love of the orthodox kind are brought under the microscope in a short novel by **Alberto Moravia, *Conjugal Love*** (Farrar, Straus and Young, $2.50), translated from the Italian by Angus Davidson. Moravia's two previous works have won him a sizable following and a good deal of critical praise. His special forte, to my mind, is his adult handling of sexuality in all its aspects, a talent which is relatively rare among Anglo-Saxon writers, however copiously or candidly they may write about sex. There is a vibrant awareness in Moravia's fiction of the erotic element in life — something of the sex-consciousness of D. H. Lawrence minus Lawrence's sex-mysticism.



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Maybe you've already forgotten whether March came in like a lion or a lamb, but we hope you haven't forgotten to get a copy of **John McNulty's** new book, ***A Man Gets Around.*** (*Little, Brown & Company: $2.75.*) "All of his friends, without exception," says James Thurber, "consider John McNulty the funniest man in the world." In ***A Man Gets Around*** Mr. McNulty goes "Back Where I Had Never Been," to Ireland, in fact, though with "a minimum of Mother Machree"; to Rhode Island, where a friend had hit the radio jackpot (they made a good movie of this one); to Bellevue Hospital, where he enjoyed the aftermath of a not too unpleasant heart attack. If you've never read John McNulty you don't know what you've missed. Read ***A Man Gets Around*** today and see for yourself.

* * * * *

"Physician, Heal Thyself!" Dr. Carl Myers was a brilliant psychoanalyst, but he was not spared because he was himself a healer. ***The World Above*** by **Abraham Polonsky** (*Little, Brown & Company: $3.50*) is a remarkable modern novel, a *very* modern novel, about a doctor in search of his soul. When we first meet Dr. Myers he is an ambitious young scientist who is "not interested in curing men, but in studying them." He learns that "the practice of life is in certain respects a practice in readiness" and that he must be prepared to improve the world as he finds it, not simply to accept things as they are. To dare to practice in his own life what he has staked his profession on requires his soul of him. ***The World Above*** is a long, rich, thoughtful novel you ought not to miss; we recommend it unreservedly to readers of the *Atlantic.*

* * * * *

And then there's a first book by a new writer, a book that's as American as a backroad farm and the nearby small town — ***Years of Eden*** by **Gordon Webber** (*Little, Brown & Company: $3.00*). Here's what Walter Van Tilburg Clark, author of *Ox-Bow Incident*, says of ***Years of Eden:*** "A profoundly beautiful book, provocative and memorable in its every part. Mr. Webber's insight into the values of the whole way of life presented through the boy, it seems to me, never flags, and his presentation of it is wonderfully simple and convincing. I do not recall a single false note, from the smoke in the ear to the bell that didn't ring. *I don't wonder Little, Brown thinks it has made a discovery.*"

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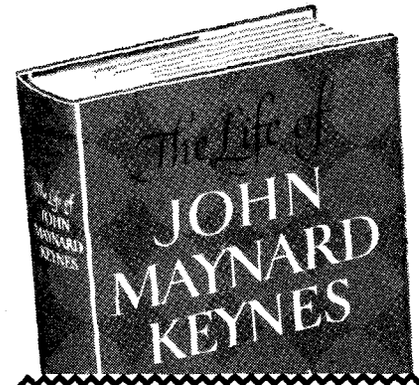
Moravia's powerful sensuality is altogether spontaneous and forthright, free of any taint of staginess; and his shrewd insight into the psychology of sex never sounds like clinical analysis.

The narrator of *Conjugal Love* is a wealthy, slightly fatuous dilettante, Silvio Baldeschi, whose life has been restless and ineffectual until his fairly recent marriage, which has proved profoundly satisfying. Baldeschi has long cherished a belief in his creative powers, and now he has the strength of purpose to apply himself to writing a masterpiece. He soon perceives, however, that what he is writing is commonplace, and concludes that a period of continence might give his inspiration more chance to express itself. Moravia leads him in due course to a recognition of his painful lack of talent and the detection of his wife in a shocking infidelity. But the discovery of the devil in his wife's flesh and the collapse of his own pretensions bring an understanding of truths which give a deeper substance to their "conjugal love."

There is no hint of Pollyanna in the way Moravia handles all this. Out of an episode which might easily have made no more than a sardonic anecdote à la Maugham, Moravia has fashioned a masterly study of the relations between a husband and a wife.

To pass from the mental climate of Moravia to that of **William Saroyan** is to regress from the Institute for Advanced Study to the kindergarten. Mr. Saroyan once produced some fine fiction inspired by the notion that life is beautiful provided you are a bum, a drunk, a prostitute, a child, a dotard, an unpublished poet, or an Armenian. Saroyan has not exactly turned traitor to this credo, but he seems to have made the distressing discovery that there is slightly more to life than was dreamed of in his philosophy. In his last book of stories, he tried his hand, rather gloomily, at what he called "the tough stuff" — the kind of tale in which life is not all a bowl of stuffed vine leaves and arak; and he does so again in his new novel, ***Rock Wagram*** (Doubleday, $3.00). While it represents a laudable attempt to deal with the tragic, *Rock Wagram* strengthens my conviction that there is no other novelist in the same echelon of talent as Saroyan who can pack so much silliness between the covers of a book.

The story has to do with an Armenian bartender of Fresno, Califor-



By R. F. Harrod

THE LIFE OF JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES is a vividly personal biography of the great economist, statesman and ardent patron of the arts. "A wholly remarkable achievement . . . Much more than a life of Keynes, it is a panorama of much of the first half of the twentieth century."
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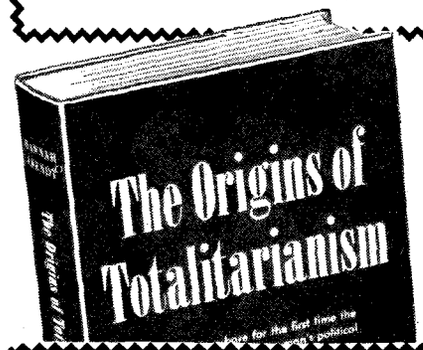

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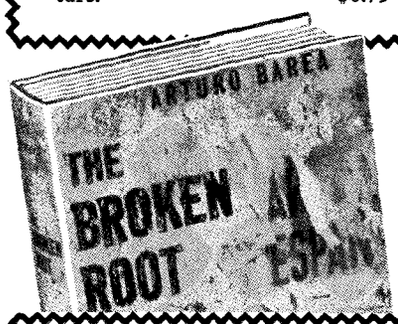

By Arturo Barea

THE BROKEN ROOT, a novel by the author of *The Forging of a Rebel,* brilliantly portrays the extraordinary resilience of the Spanish people under the oppression of Franco's Spain. *The Broken Root* is anti-Fascist, anti-Communist, and pro-Spanish. $3.50

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nia, who becomes a movie star; marries a girl, half his age, who appears to consider that heaven is the Stork Club; divorces her, after they have had two children, because she is a liar; and then resolutely goes to pieces, longing for a wife, kids, a vineyard, and Armenian companionship. I confess to being exasperated, perhaps beyond reason, by Saroyan's chronic cuteness and his now melancholy, earnest-sounding mindlessness. Readers who do not suffer from this allergy may well find a certain poignancy in his new novel.

Two eminent Georgians

The life of a professional economist sounds like a thoroughly unpromising subject for a biographer. But the late John Maynard Keynes, besides being the most commanding and controversial figure in contemporary economics, was an altogether remarkable personality; his career, from his schooldays on, is the story of a man endowed with stunning intellectual powers who did everything he turned his hand to with spectacular brilliance, and who also had a genius for friendship and enjoyment of living. Lord Keynes, who died in 1946, is now the subject of a long biography by an Oxford don, **Roy Harrod,** whose lectures on Keynesian economics I attended as an undergraduate. Mr. Harrod is one of the leading British economists generally in sympathy with Keynes's viewpoint: Keynes regularly sought and respected his criticism.

The Life of John Maynard Keynes (Harcourt, Brace, $7.50), while it contains too much economics to be easy reading, is both an admirable personal history and a trenchant study of Keynes's doctrine, far-reaching influence, and concrete achievement. The economic fundamentalists who hold that there is one god, *laissez-faire,* and that Adam Smith is the true prophet, have absurdly misrepresented Keynes as a "socialistic" theorist, hell-bent on destroying the capitalist system. In point of fact, though he advocated government planning to level out the cycle of boom and depression, Keynes strongly favored the private enterprise system and was strongly critical of much in the economic policies of the Socialist Government.

It is impossible to sum up in a review Keynes's immense contribution to the economic thought and practice of our time. Mr. Harrod places him

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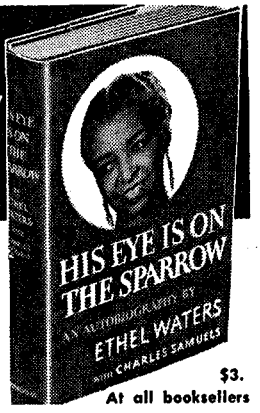

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THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY, BOSTON

in the same class as the two greatest architects of economics, Adam Smith and Ricardo.

Keynes became a professional economist almost by accident. At Eton he studied the classics and read medieval Latin poetry as a hobby. At Cambridge he specialized in mathematics and philosophy — later he published a notable *Treatise on Probability.* He would, in fact, have become a philosopher had not the dean of Cambridge economists, Alfred Marshall, impressed by the few undergraduate essays Keynes wrote in economics, persuaded him to accept a Lectureship in this field.

During the First World War, Keynes, still in his early thirties, was responsible for conducting the whole of Britain's external finances. His famous indictment of the economic provisions of the Treaty of Versailles, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace,* closed the door to an official career. Between wars, he taught at Cambridge; was an editor and prolific journalist; wrote his two big books on economic theory; served as Chairman of the Board of an insurance company and as an investment counselor in the City; and, starting from scratch, he made a fortune of some two million dollars by audacious speculation on the stock exchange. I wonder how many of the newspaper critics who have attacked Keynes as a typical "theorist," intoxicated with abstract ideas, know that for some twenty years he displayed the same kind of wizardry in the market place as a Bernard Baruch.

Keynes's close friends were mostly artists — members of the "Bloomsbury Group" such as Lytton Strachey — and he himself married a prima ballerina of the Diaghilev company. He liked to entertain, and at one of his parties executed a creditable can-can with his wife. He was a generous patron of the theater, a discerning collector of modern painting, a bibliophile who read his First Editions, and a fine prose stylist. During the Second World War, Keynes played a leading role in the conferences which established the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank; and he was the chief spokesman of the British team which negotiated the post-war American loan. Harrod considers Keynes to have been one of England's greatest speakers. On one occasion the stubborn Mr. Bevin, refusing to be persuaded by Keynes, paid a witty tribute to Keynes's persuasiveness: "When I hear Lord Keynes talking," said Bevin, "I seem to hear those coins jingling in my pocket; but I am not so sure they are really there."

Keynes's friend, **Bertrand Russell,** winner of the 1950 Nobel Prize for Literature, calls his latest book ***Unpopular Essays*** (Simon & Schuster, $2.50), because some reviewers complained that his last book was too "difficult" for a popularization, and in the present volume "there are several sentences . . . which some unusually stupid children of ten might find a little puzzling." These essays (two of which have appeared in the *Atlantic*) display, in concentrated form, Russell's characteristic qualities — the wit, crispness, and lucidity of his prose; the vigor of his intellect, the grace with which he wears his erudition; and, above all, his undeviating rationalism. The binding concern is "to combat in one way or another, the growth of dogmatism, which has hitherto characterized our tragic century." Anyone who shares this concern will, I am pretty sure, get a good deal of pleasure out of Russell's book; for my part I found it a delight.

Lord Russell is one of the great virtuosi in the salutary art of debunking; but he holds that mere skepticism is itself a form of dogmatism, certain of *not* knowing, and he suggests that wisdom lies in learning to endure uncertainty. Russell's assaults on dogmatism lead him to consider, among other things, the way man's self-importance has shaped certain theological beliefs; the "ulterior motives" of the great philosophers; the fallacy of the popular maxim, "Human nature cannot be changed." I cannot recall an essay which so neatly punctures so many of the superstitions of Homo *soi-disant* sapiens as "An Outline of Intellectual Rubbish." Here, to suggest the scope of Russell's volume, are some of the other topics he discusses: "Philosophy and Politics"; "The Functions of a Teacher"; "Eminent Men I Have Known"; "The Future of Mankind."

Potpourri

THE RIDDLE OF MACARTHUR *by John Gunther.* Harper, $2.75.

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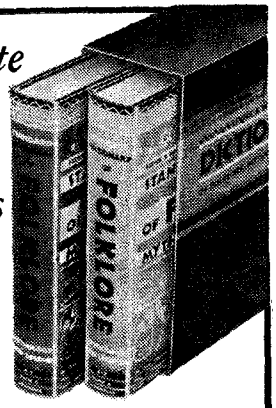

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usual he has turned in a splendidly timed, lively, and uncommonly informative report. In this case, moreover, it seems an exceptionally clear-sighted one. Gunther shows no disposition to soft-pedal MacArthur's familiar shortcoming — at one point he says that the General "goes so far as to think of himself and the Pope as the two leading representatives of Christianity" — but MacArthur's abilities and achievements as proconsul are sharply brought into focus. He has done a remarkable job, on the whole, Gunther concludes, of imposing democracy on Japan — "like a dictator."

THE SHORT STORY *by Sean O'Faolain.* Devin-Adair, $3.75.

This is neither a conventional manual to short-story writing nor an exercise in literary criticism, but it is certainly an outstanding book about the short story — full of spirit, provocative ideas, and telling insights. The first section explores the "writing personalities" of Daudet, Chekov, and Maupassant. The middle chapters discuss "the technical struggle." Then follow eight notable stories which illustrate O'Faolain's points. What I like so much about the book is O'Faolain's emphasis that, "in all art, about one tenth is skill and the rest is personality." The quality that makes the great writer, he says, is "an assertively personal way of seeing and feeling . . . imperviousness to conventional ideas."

STAR QUALITY *by Noel Coward.* Doubleday, $3.00.

Four of these six stories have to do with acting folk, and the settings are London, Hollywood, a transatlantic airliner, and an islet in the Pacific. Coward's brand of sophistication — his insistently brittle tone and rather obvious cleverness — seems as quaintly old-fashioned today in the short-story form as his narrative technique, with its conventional "twists" and its fondness for "sock" curtain lines. And Coward's shallowness and sentimentality are more obtrusive in the short story than on the stage. He is still, however, a pretty reliable hand at lightweight entertainment.

MORNING JOURNEY *by James Hilton.* Atlantic-Little, Brown, $3.00.

Hilton's latest novel is centered on a Dublin actress who becomes a leading lady on Broadway, and an American producer of plays and films who is something of an artistic genius and an impossibly difficult human being. The story deals with Carey Arundel's youthful marriage to Paul Saffron; the tensions that cause them to separate; Carey's attempt to make a "normal" life for herself as the wife of a rich businessman; and her reinvolvement in Saffron's career. Mr. Hilton has reworked a familiar drama of the theater with urbane competence, but he has brought nothing new to it.

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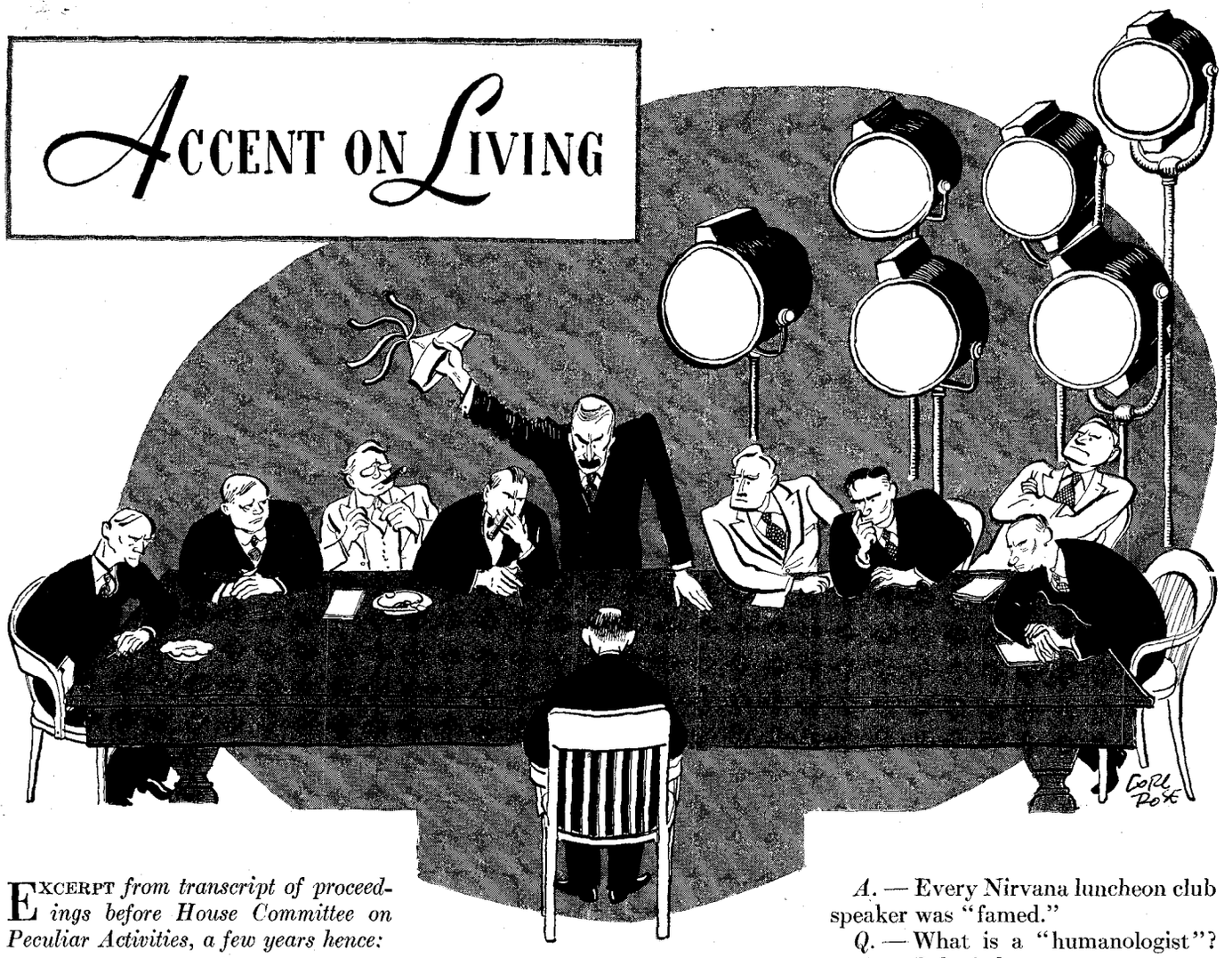

THIS MONTH

EXCERPT *from transcript of proceedings before House Committee on Peculiar Activities, a few years hence:*

Q. — Now I want you to tell this committee whether you are now or ever have been a member of the secret organization known as Rotary International.

A. — Positively not.

Q. — Were you ever a Realtor?

A. — I refuse to answer by advice of counsel.

Q. — Did you ever join a Kiwanis Club?

A. — No.

Q. — Are you sure?

A. — Absolutely.

Q. — It has been testified here that you were a member of the Woodmen of the World, the Optimists Club, and the Tall Cedars of Lebanon. Think carefully. Did you or did you not belong to any or all of these organizations?

A. — I did not.

Q. — Did you ever support, directly or indirectly, any of the organizations about which I have asked you?

A. — No.

Q. — I offer in evidence a news story from the Nirvana *Evening Chronicle*, dated Tuesday, August 7, 1934, as it appeared under your byline, and I read you the opening paragraph: —

> Nirvana is not only the fastest growing town in Central Ohio, but by 1950 its population will have doubled to 44,000, Dr. J. Seabury Rataplan, famed humanologist, told a record turnout of Kiwanians here today. In an inspiring talk . . .

Now, sir, didn't you write that story, those words which I have just read to the committee? Yes or no?

A. — I must have.

Q. — Assuming that you did write that account, just who was Dr. J. Seabury Rataplan?

A. — I have no idea.

Q. — Ah, you have no idea. You did not know, I dare say, for what he was famous?

A. — Not at all.

Q. — So that, when you referred to him as a "famed humanologist," you were deliberately creating a false impression?

A. — Every Nirvana luncheon club speaker was "famed."

Q. — What is a "humanologist"?

A. — I don't know.

Q. — But you did attend meetings of these organizations?

A. — Thousands of them.

Q. — Were not these meetings clandestine?

A. — No, they all wanted lots of publicity.

Q. — And you helped them get it?

A. — Only in the course of my duties —

Q. — Never mind that. By the way, just where were meetings of this kind held?

A. — Usually at the Nirvana Arms — Parlor A, I believe.

Q. — Let me put you this question: Did you ever wear a paper hat?

A. — Once only.

Q. — You were not in the habit of wearing a paper hat on other occasions?

A. — I was not.

Q. — Now I ask you whether other persons present in Parlor A on this occasion were also wearing paper hats. Were they?

A. — They were.

Q. — You were, and they were. But you still want the committee to

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believe that you were not a member of this organization — in this case the Optimists, wasn't it? Never mind. I withdraw the question and ask you to admit that you did in fact contribute financially to the support of the Kiwanis Club.

A. — I did not.

Q. — Perhaps this will refresh your recollection. I shall read now an entry from Exhibit 734-A, Treasurer's Account Book, Nirvana Kiwanis Club, page 36, under date of August 20, 1934, headed "Fines Collected." Opposite your name is the notation: "Fifty cents." I challenge you to explain why a nonmember of this organization should pay a "fine" to its treasury.

A. — That was for keeping my coat on.

Q. — *For keeping your coat on?*

A. — All the members lunched in their shirt sleeves at summer meetings. After I paid the fine I had to take my coat off too.

Q. — Oh, your story now is that you *didn't* keep your coat on? And are we to believe that it was taken off by force? I think you said, "I had to take it off . . ."

A. — Correct.

Q. — Even though, as you insist, you were not a member? Well, what else occurred at this extraordinary luncheon? Was there roaring? Strike that out. Wasn't there singing?

A. — In a sense, yes.

Q. — And what, may I ask, were some of the "songs"?

A. — "Smiles," "Jingle Bells," and "Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit-Bag."

Q. — What was the purpose of this so-called "singing"?

A. — I have no idea.

Q. — You sang, with the others?

A. — Everybody sang. Everybody had to sing.

Q. — Indeed. Yet you were never told why?

A. — Never.

Q. — You were "fined" again on this occasion, were you not?

A. — Twenty-five cents.

Q. — Can you tell us why?

A. — Well, there was a man at our table whom I didn't know very well — a mortician by the name of George Schlemmerschnitte; so when I spoke to him I called him George — instead of using his nickname.

Q. — If, as you say, you didn't know him very well, how did you know that he had a nickname?

A. — It was on his identification badge —

Q. — Oh, so they had "identification badges"? What was this mortician's nickname?

A. — "Butch."

Q. — Were the other members using assumed names or, as you see fit to describe them, nicknames?

A. — All of them.

Q. — I have only one more question: I assume from your version of what Dr. Rataplan told the Kiwanians that the population of Nirvana at the time was some 22,000. This was to become 44,000, according to your report. Now I ask you: What was, in fact, the population of Nirvana in the 1950 Census?

A. — 18,746.

Q. — You may step down.

CHARLES W. MORTON

THE BICYCLE THIEF

by WALTER M. GIBB

A native of Cleveland and a graduate of the University of Chicago, WALTER M. GIBB *is a member of the staff of the Baltimore* Sun.

At forty-two, an age when most criminals can point to a rather commendable record, I find myself just starting out. I can boast no time in the big house, no post office portraits, no flattering bail. The police teletype has never whispered my name. But no matter. All this is to come if only I persevere.

Five times in the past eight months I have been questioned by the police.

On no occasion was I crawling along anybody's cornice. Nor was I dynamiting a path to the bank, or burning macadam in a getaway car. Nothing so hackneyed marks my underworld entry. What makes me a thorn in the side of Baltimore's Finest is riding a bicycle through Guilford after midnight.

But I must not brag, for I was unaware of the enormity of such conduct until the police picked me up. The language is figurative: I got off the bicycle of my own free will the instant I found my way blocked by a squad car.

The driver had angle-parked, cutting me off like a piece of pie, and before I could pedal as far as the

point, his friend was out confronting me with a flashlight.

"You live around here?"

"I'm sorry," I replied, "but I fear I shall have to say no to that one. What address are you looking for?"

He ran the light over me a couple of times and then two or three times over the bicycle. "We're not looking for any address," he said. "Where do you live?"

The question was neither logical nor gracious, but I answered it nonetheless. I did more: I volunteered information about my place and hours of employment, my opinion of the weather, and my concern for his health. He made no comment, but neither did he go away. So I showed him my press card, automobile registration, gasoline charge card, and an insurance identification listing the next of kin. He paid next to no attention. Finally I told him something about my work itself: how, when you came right down to it, our respective jobs had a great deal in common, inasmuch as I too listened to the police calls over a little radio right on the desk. That seemed to impress him.

"Well, captain," he said, "we're sorry to have bothered you, but, as you probably heard on your little radio, we had a little trouble out this way tonight." And he turned back to the car.

"What kind of trouble?" I asked.

"A little burglary," he said as they

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drove off. I drove off too, but slowly. It takes time to accustom oneself, even imaginatively, to the feel of a shoulder holster.

Next day I learned that the burglar in question had made off with several fur coats, dozens of evening gowns, a number of men's suits and overcoats,

and a small antique chest. My respect for the bicycle increased.

Weeks went by before I was stopped again. They were weeks of meditation, when, as they say of the drowning, I reviewed my whole life up to the sinking point.

It had not always been this way with me. I had seen better years, two score of them, the first under the watchful care of my mother, the last beneath a great green eyeshade. In both states the shelter factor had been the same. And the frustration. Especially the frustration. What was my life as a copyreader but one long round of vicarious evil? Hour after hour I participated at pencil point in the exploits of bandits and bigamists and piano players and all the others who led newsworthy lives, only to drive home at last through dark and sinister streets which I myself had done nothing to make that way. In short, it was an existence which no one with the slightest spark of delinquency could put up with forever.

Deliverance came one sunny afternoon. I had eaten breakfast, stacked the dishes, and was out on the back porch beginning my eye exercises. Near the end of the first long swing, at about 120 degrees, I saw my daughter's bicycle lying across the walk. I went over to pick it up when something snapped, something not in the bicycle but in me. Whatever suspenderlike thing it is which holds up the fear of a God-fearing man gave way with a ping, and almost before I realized it I had ridden around the block.

That was the first step. Before the week was up, without confiding in anyone, I had bought a secondhand wheel with a three-speed hub and was riding it to work and back, thirteen miles a night.

My wife was stunned, of course, and did what she could to keep it from the neighbors. But with me she could do nothing. I was too far gone to be moved by the old appeals to self-respect, consideration for our daughter's future, and all the other maudlinnesses with which beginning criminals have to put up. I had experienced the exhilaration of a break with society, and there was no stopping me.

Except by the police. I had not counted on that. Instead, I had told myself over and over — as how many beginning porch-climbers have not — that I was only in this for the exercise and what could be wrong with that?

Of such whimsey my second brush with the law was even more disabusing than the first. Rain had overtaken me that night and was coming down hard by the time I reached Highfield Road. There, sloshing along among the rock piles, I saw a solitary patrolman, and instantly I felt for him the kinship of wayfarers in the storm.

"Hi!" I shouted.

"Hi!" he replied, and then, a moment later, "Hey!"

With that he splashed right out into the street and began televising me with his flashlight. "You live around here?" he wanted to know.

I answered him politely enough. But when I, in my turn, wanted to know if the people who did live around there slipped out at 4 A.M. for a good old bike ride in the rain, he acted a bit unfriendly.

"I'll ask the questions," he said. "Got anything to identify yourself?"

So, standing in the downpour, surrounded by the largest shelters in Baltimore, I established my identity.

"Tell me just one thing," I asked. "Why am I never stopped when I drive through here, but only when I ride?"

"Listen," he said, "you don't have to be on the force very long to find out that a guy on a bike usually turns out to be a sneak thief."

I thanked him and rode on.

My third and fourth encounters with the police had nothing special to commend them, other than being two more examples of the fact that crime does not pay. But my fifth (and last, up to this writing) had at least the novelty of taking place on the go.

For some time that night I was unaware of a patrol car driving beside me. To understand this I should explain that on these rides body and soul do not always travel together. Cycling along through the quiet and the dark, past one after another modern ruin, at fixed rhythm and fixed gaze, induces a kind of separateness in which the creaturely world and the stuff in me which likes to have nothing to do with it part company. This occasions long lapses of identity. It is as though I were making the run in two sections, railroad fashion, albeit not on the same track.

This night one section was going north on Greenway, bent well over the handlebars, while the other trudged barefoot along a dusty road in Saxony early in the twelfth century. Gradually I became aware of a voice beside me. I looked up and, lo, there was this police car, and the officer who had spoken was waiting for an answer. I had not made out his words, but by now the formula was familiar.

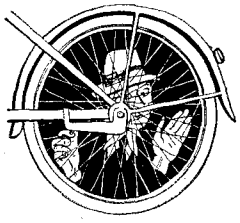
"No, I don't live around here," I said, "but if I can be of any assistance . . . ?"

He laughed. "I was just asking if you're taking a trip somewhere."

For an awful moment I thought they were inviting me to take one with them, and that this was the end. Still riding — indeed, not daring to stop — I recited in a breath the vital statistics which so far have kept me out of prison.

This time it was the driver who spoke. "Okay, fella," he shouted, "but hold it under forty!" And he pulled ahead, the two of them laughing.

Let them laugh, I thought. There was a time the police jested with Dillinger. Rome did not decline and fall overnight, and I have some of the worst years of my life ahead of me.



NOTE TO NEW FATHERS

by RICHARD ARMOUR

HERE is a fact
That is unmistakable:
The second baby
Doesn't seem so breakable.

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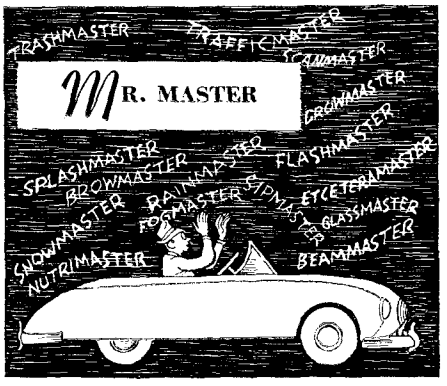

by DAVID McCORD

DAVID MCCORD *is widely known not only for his own poetry and light verse but also for his comprehensive anthology* What Cheer.

THE man at the wheel of the green convertible entered a small green village. He glanced at the dial on the instrument board. It told him with mechanical indifference that he needed gas. There was a gas station just ahead to the right.

"Gas," he said to the attendant.

It was late afternoon and the sky was heavy with dark clouds. He listened to the whir of the pump and watched the dollars and gallons revolve in happy unison for a minute or so. A frown crossed his face as a spatter of fine raindrops struck the windshield of the Roadmaster.

"Shower, I guess," said the attendant, shutting off the pump. "Ever tried our Rainmaster?"

"I've used Snowmaster," said the man. "And Fogmaster is good. Does a nice job. But you know — you can't really master fog."

"Rainmaster's good," said the attendant. "Fifty cents; small size. Okay?"

"Here you are," said the man. "And I'll take a Coke."

He pulled out his Inkmaster and noted the cost of the gas. The attendant dropped a nickel into the Cokemaster and extracted a bottle.

"Want a cup, mister?"

"No. Give me a straw."

"Sipmaster," corrected the attendant, covering the windshield with a protective spray.

The man finished the Coke, tossed the bottle into the handy Trashmaster, circled out into the road, turned on his Mikemaster, put a stick of juicy Jawmaster in his mouth, and fell to thinking. The rain had stopped as suddenly as it had begun. It was about six-thirty now and he was heading west. The sun blazed out from behind a rain cloud. He pushed a button on the Pushmaster panel and the Sunmaster shut out the glare. (If he pressed it twice it would give him the Moonmaster, which was something new.) He reached into his pocket for his Nosemaster and blew his nose. For an hour he drove, chewed, and listened.

Seven-thirty news. . . . He shut off the castermaster, rapidly tuned in a couple of croonmasters, a quizmaster, a covey of gagmasters, and was passing over the close of a commercial on the new homogenizing Fruitsaladmaster, when a voice said suddenly: "The President of the United States asks you to stand by for an important message."

He caught the startled look on his own face in the Glassmaster. *The President of the United States!* Where had he last heard that phrase? Someone was rattled. The *Statesmaster* of the United States, of course. . . . *The President of the United States!* He might have been living in the days of Jefferson or Cleveland or F.D.R.

Someone was certainly rattled.

What was wrong?

Was this it?

Atommaster?

Hydrogenmaster?

Tetrahydrogendiozenemaster?

Trikillulolmaster?

Nervously he touched the Flamemaster Junior to the end of his cigar, which had gone out. He flicked some ashes off his trousers and noted — the way one does in a crisis — where his tailor's Pantsmaster had carelessly double-creased them.

Stand by. . . . The voice was tense and appropriate.

It was nearly dark now and he pulled up at an intersection on the edge of another town. A trafficmaster put his head halfway through the window.

"Lights, buddy!"

"Okay."

He touched the Beammaster's toggle and slipped off into the Polaroid.

His hand was on the Mikemaster and he cut in a series of stations. It was all the same: "Stand by. . . . Stand by. . . . Stand by. . . ."

The hands on his Wristmaster said 7.47. He was in a bright street now. He could see the anxious look on the faces of the other people in other cars. The American flag waved for a breezy second on the screen of a Vis-a-vismaster in the window of a shop. A small crowd had collected in front of it. He drove on slowly, settled back masterfully, and waited.

The spell broke.

". . . of the radio audience. . . . This is the Airmaster speaking from Washington at the request of the Statesmaster. It is now 7.49 Daylightmaster time. At 8.06 an epochal event in world history will take place. From the government secret base at Secret, N.M., a new type of Spacemaster rocket has been fired. For reasons of security the time of firing will not be divulged. But tonight at 8.06 Daylightmaster time the rocket is expected to reach the Moon. No one is aboard, but the warhead full of deurythium killulol will explode on impact, and the flash will be visible on Earth to the naked eye from the Atlantic seaboard to Illinois. Watch your Moon for the crimson flash at 8.06 P.M. It will signal man's first contact with our Satellite."

". . . This is station WWW. You have just been listening to an important message from the Airmaster in Washington. Earthbound friends: What could be better than Synthies? Their crunchy crescendos are heard the world over. But that is not all. Just before you see the crimson flash on the face of the Moon at 8.06 P.M. Daylightmaster time, six Jetmasters attached to the Spacemaster will be fired automatically at six acute angles so as not to fall in the Spacemaster's path. These six Jetmasters will open hermetically and scatter, like peas from a pod, hundreds of spaceproof

packages of Synthies! If a race of Moonmen exists — and evidence points to their existence — you may be sure that they will welcome Synthies with their Earthpakt vitamins. When you travel to the Moon, travel with *Synthies!*"

He pulled up, parked his car, and got out. The fields beyond were silvery. It had cleared miraculously overhead. What a world! he thought. What a Moon! What an idea! He took off his gray Feltmaster, wiped his forehead, and looked up in awe.

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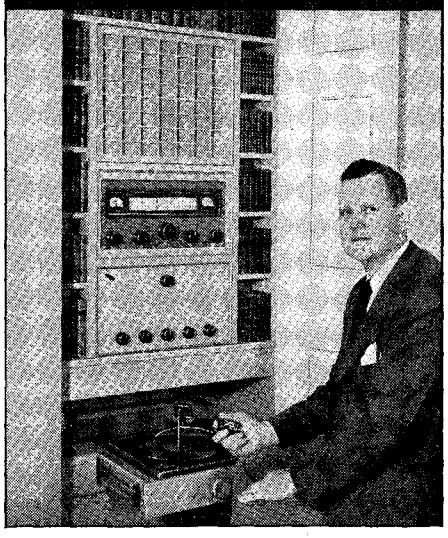
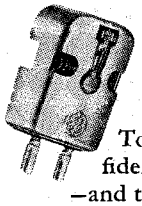


VARIABLE RELUCTANCE CARTRIDGE

"CUSTOMER satisfaction means everything in my business. That's why General Electric cartridges are standard in all my installations." This is the opinion of custom designer Philip C. Kelsey of Guilford, Connecticut, shown above beside one of his made-to-order FM-phonograph combinations.



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HIGH FIDELITY GROWS UP

by JOHN M. CONLY

JOHN M. CONLY *is a former New York and Washington newspaperman who is now an associate editor of* Pathfinder. *"They Shall Have Music" is a quarterly feature in the* Atlantic.

WHY do they have to keep it so loud?" bellowed a magazine writer to a colleague. "You can't hear yourself think!"

They were sharing a small room in the Hotel New Yorker with Igor Stravinsky's ballet suite *Petrouchka*, zestfully performed by Ernest Ansermet and the 110-piece Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, and projected with literally stunning impact by a 30-watt amplifier and a vast, darkly gleaming, three-unit corner loud-speaker.

"Maybe that's it," answered the colleague, as they escaped into a corridor. "Maybe they don't want to hear themselves think. They've really accomplished something, you know. They've built a whole industry, in next to no time, out of a cultural need nobody else would believe existed. And now, just when it's ready to pay off, up pops Joe Stalin, threatening to send the whole thing back to scratch."

A door opened beside them and out came a noted music critic, wiping his brow. Around him emerged a tremendous gust of percussive clattering.

"Edgard Varèse," he explained, half apologetically. "*Ionization*. Considered very modern in 1931. A truncated trend, you might say. Sounds like a threshing machine loose in a china shop."

This was the 1950 Audio Fair, second of its kind, at which seventy dealers and makers of custom home-music equipment had gathered, early last winter, to display their wares to the public and to each other. It took up two hotel floors with several tons of loud-speakers, amplifiers, FM and AM radio tuners, multispeed record-changers, precision turntables and phono-pickups, tape recorders and acoustic cabinets.

The air was athrob with *Petrouchka* (London Records), *Ionization* (EMS), and Saint-Saëns's *Symphony No. 3 in C Minor* (Columbia), the one with the organ passage — the three current records most popular as demonstrators of equipment's range and tone.

There were uncounted visitors. The Fair management had prepared 5000 registration cards and 7500 identification tags, and ran out of both early the third day. Some of the visitors had come a long way for their aural window shopping. Discovering that a woman he'd been talking to had flown from California that morning, one exhibitor actually got a little misty around the eyes. "It sure makes you respect music," he said, his grammar failing under stress, "when people want it in their homes that bad."

The mood of the visitors was exultant and anticipatory. They'd found proof of something rumored: that the reproduction of recorded and broadcast music had progressed far beyond anything hinted at in the ready-made radio-phonograph and television sets to be seen in retail stores; that the components to deliver such reproduction were available at net prices (60 per cent of "list"); that one did not have to be a technical genius to hook them up and install them in house walls or even in the Welsh cupboard Grandma left. (Of great assistance in such ventures, however, especially where obdurate carpenters or radio service men have to be directed, are certain dealers and manufacturers' catalogues, and a rather formidable but authoritative volume called *Audio*

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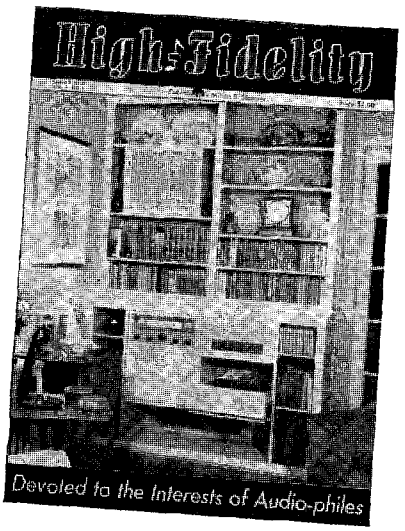
High-Fidelity

Published by Milton B. Sleeper

Bankers Building, Great Barrington, Massachusetts



This Will Interest You—

IN THE LAST TWO YEARS, there has developed an amazing interest in fine radio and recorded music for home entertainment. Previously the possibilities of high-fidelity reproduction were known only to engineers and a few technically-minded hobbyists.

But suddenly people began to reject the synthetic tone quality of ordinary radio sets and phonographs. For they discovered the totally different kind of music available from the new types of records, improved tape recorders, and static-free FM broadcasting.

And to their surprise, they found that equipment capable of magnificent tone quality is moderate in cost, admirably suited to inconspicuous custom-built installations.

The more people learned about this new kind of musical entertainment, the more they wanted a source of information devoted to their particular interests. HIGH-FIDELITY Magazine has been brought out to meet their specific needs.

It is published by Milton B. Sleeper, also the publisher of RADIO COMMUNICATION, author of many technical books, and a prominent figure in the radio industry for more than thirty years.

HIGH-FIDELITY is a big magazine, 8¾ by 11½ ins., handsomely illustrated, beautifully printed on fine paper. You'll find the contents interesting, readable, authoritative, filled with a wealth of information available from no other source. A year's subscription (4 big quarterly issues) will give you a full 12-months' supply of new ideas, supplemented by a Readers' service always ready to help you. Subscribe now so you will have the first issue, out April 15.

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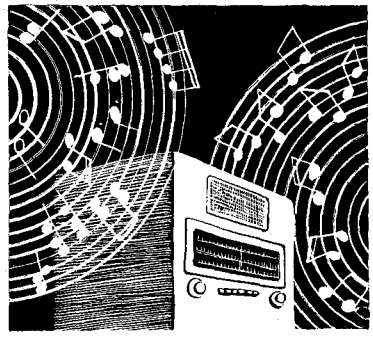
Anthology, sold at either $2 or $3, depending on the cover, by *Audio Engineering* magazine, 342 Madison Ave., New York.)

The exhibitors displayed a certain jubilance also. The voice of the President had not yet been heard in the land, announcing that the supply of electronic equipment to the Armed Forces was to be stepped up fourfold within the year. To be sure, tubes were becoming hard to get, although *Variety* had checked and found that the government had drawn off only a tenth of the supply (presumably the big TV manufacturers had used their weight to acquire the rest). Aluminum and plastics were getting to be a problem too, and cobalt rationing was bound, before long, to put a crimp in loud-speaker production.

Prices had started rising, of course, as well. The $125 figure cited two years ago by a consumers' laboratory for a high-fidelity home installation never had been truly realistic and now had gone by the board. However, $250 still would procure a rig incomparably better than any but the most expensive ready-made sets.

And business was booming. Every publication which ran an article on high-fidelity or custom home-music sets, or whatever else it cared to call them, was promptly swamped with letters. Duncan Scott, customer service manager of Lafayette Radio, one of the biggest mail-order houses, estimated that sales volume for 1950 was between 500 and 600 per cent of that for 1949 — and 1949's had been nearly eight times greater than that for 1948. Queries put to each of a number of manufacturers, asking them to guess (1) what percentage of the national sales they supplied and (2) how big the whole national annual volume should be, on this basis, reliably evoked estimates of about 260 million dollars. Even allowing for competitive optimism, this indicated that a lot of Americans have invested considerable cash in furnishing their homes with lifelike music.



It indicated something else, too, likely to reassure worried enthusiasts. The high-fidelity industry was firmly enough established to survive a national emergency or, at least, to reappear after the emergency's end, although casualties would be heavy. It has always been an industry of small outfits, working on narrow profit margins and without side lines. Prolonged shortages would put many out of business, sending their owners back into the war-work laboratories where many of them had earned their initial stakes in the early 1940s.

It was not surprising that some of these were not especially anxious to hear themselves think.

To some of the larger companies involved in supplying the American home with music, the national emergency looked less disastrous. For wholesale supply houses, there was the comforting fact that the government now regards radio as a vital link in the nation's communications system. This guarantees a degree of priority for replacement parts. For the bigger manufacturers, there was the likelihood of preparedness contracts. A sales executive of one of the biggest, which furnishes most U.S. theaters with sound equipment, has reported considerable success in selling multi-speaker sound systems to municipalities and large private firms by calling them, not music systems, but "disaster" systems (usable for music, however, if there should be no disaster).

This didn't mean that enthusiasts could count on being able to get components or spare parts promptly throughout any prolonged emergency. They couldn't. Maintenance priorities almost certainly would be slanted toward the AM table radio, the lowest common denominator in radio communication. TV and hi-fi equipment would probably be rated as luxury stuff.

However, these were problems outside the province of audio experts. So, quite properly, they stuck to the problems and the progress within it, and there were plenty of both. In fact, progress itself had brewed many problems.

Primarily, there was the problem of growing up. Norman Pickering, brilliant young manufacturer of phono-pickups and speakers, spoke pointedly to colleagues about this at a technical session of the Audio Engineering Society. It was time, he made clear, for equipment suppliers to stop acting like hobbyists and start acting like businessmen — at least when customers were around.

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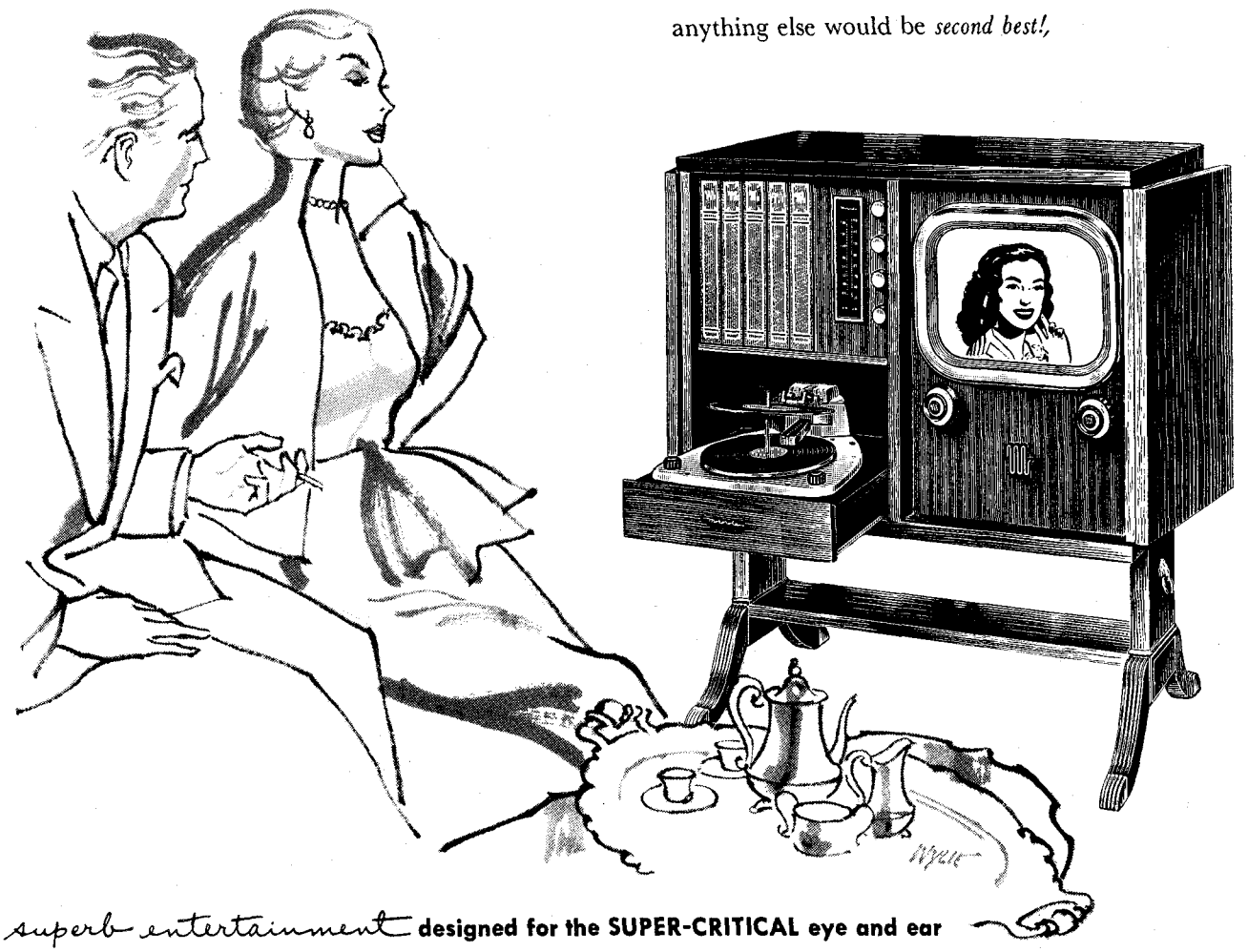
Conversation Piece

. . . from the first moment it's in your home, it's the object of attention and admiration of every eye and ear. For here is the most talked about, the most wanted television combination in the world. Here is years-ahead performance and Fashion Award styling that tells your good judgement you've chosen the finest for yourself, your family, your home . . . anything else would be *second best!*



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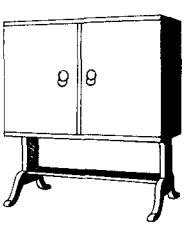

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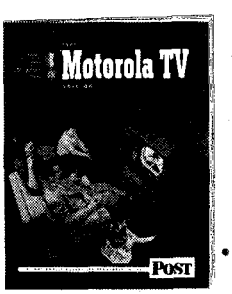

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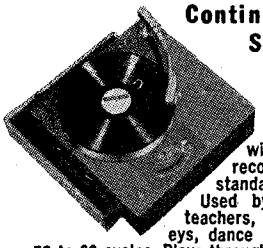

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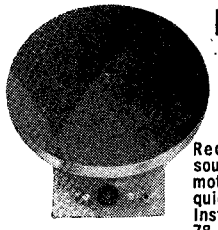

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Most customers come to shops, or to audio exhibits, with their own living rooms in mind. To have their ears split, on arrival, by all the decibels His Majesty's Grenadier Guards Band can cram into a record groove may impress them, but not helpfully. Neither does it put them at their ease to have the sound source leap magically from speaker to speaker around the wall of a demonstration room, no matter how proud the demonstrator is of his trick switchboard. The average customer also fails signally to be entranced by frequency curves or talk of kilocycles per second. This is usually because he hasn't the faintest idea how many kilocycles he left behind him in the 1940 mahogany console in his living room; he just knows that music from it sounds muffled and that he wants something better.

"I've learned what the volume knob on an amplifier is for," said the youthful boss of a Washington installation outfit, one of the nation's most successful. "It's to keep turned down, until the customer asks to have it turned up."

Associated with the problem of growing up is what might be called the problem of emphasis.

"Talk to Maximilian Weil about it," said a Fair official. "He's the dean of this craft. He's a genius, too. You can tell he's a genius by looking at him."

Genius or not, Maximilian Weil was the only exhibitor who demanded dead silence in his demonstration room at the Audio Fair, and got it. He is a small, ageless, earnest man, with immense dignity. He fascinates children, and they him. He refused to answer any questions until he had dislodged a reluctant adult from a front-row chair to make room for a silent, starry-eyed little girl.

Weil, who is president of the Audak Company, New York, has a long and illustrious history in the design and manufacture of phonographic components. He got into this in 1916, and has 174 patents in the field. He made more than half the world's gramophone tone-heads in old acoustic days, and invented the first electronic pickup. This was used principally for

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reproducing the sound of early talkies, which was recorded on disks synchronized with the film.

His latest contribution is the Audax Polyphase pickup, the first really successful high-performance tone-head which will flip over to play either standard or microgroove records. It is also phenomenally noiseless, especially on 78 r.p.m. records, and produces almost no record-wear, two qualities which probably go together. Weil thinks it was a sad day when the term "high fidelity" was coined.

It cropped up in the early 1930s, he recalls. Some years earlier, Grigsby-Grunow, a firm now extinct, had produced a speaker which would deliver real bass. Other manufacturers rallied round, and the public got an earful of tympani and bull fiddles. Then the other end of the sound spectrum was invaded. When the Radio Manufacturers Association first defined high fidelity, it meant any reproduction reaching frequencies above 7000 cycles per second, which for the first time made a fife or a triangle really audible. It would be regarded today (when many an amplifier will deliver 20,000 cycles) as kid stuff.

However, Weil points out, it sufficed to identify wide range with fidelity among audio men, and they have largely succeeded in selling the same concept to the public. Weil thinks the engineers might benefit by watching oscillographs less and going to concerts more. Having made up the musical deficiencies of commercially standard amplifiers and loud-speakers, they have plunged on into an acoustico-electronic never-never land, introducing through their gadgets sound effects which simply don't exist in music.

Weil cites the case of a musician who tried out an ultra high-fidelity system and complained that it didn't sound right. Nor did he take kindly to the audio man's explanation that he'd have to "get used to it." He went to concerts every week, he explained with some heat, and he didn't have to get used to *them*.

Weil, who used to play the violin himself, sides with the musician. "There is a lot we don't know yet," he says, "about the ear and what it hears, especially music." He stoutly advises customers to trust firmly to their ears, refusing to be awed by performance characteristics shown them in graphs and figures. One speaker, amplifier, and pickup may have exactly the same technical ratings as an-

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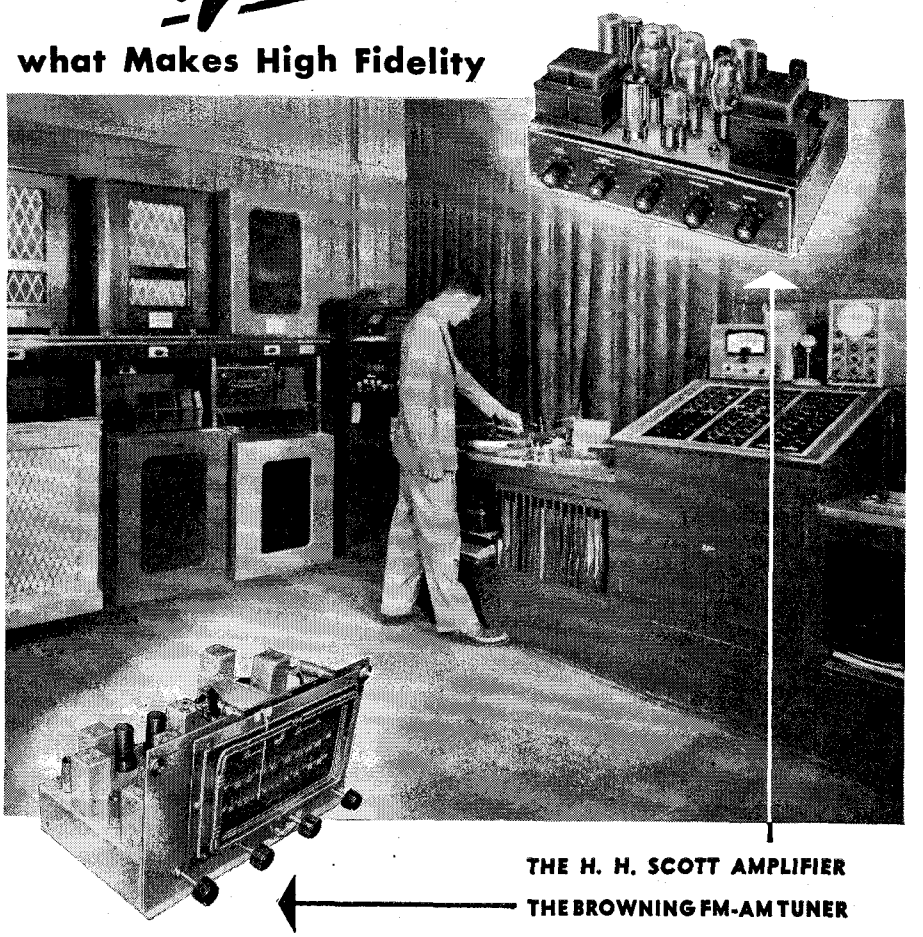
what Makes High Fidelity



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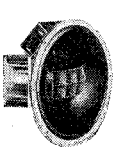

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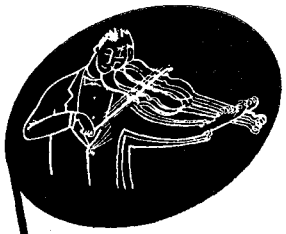

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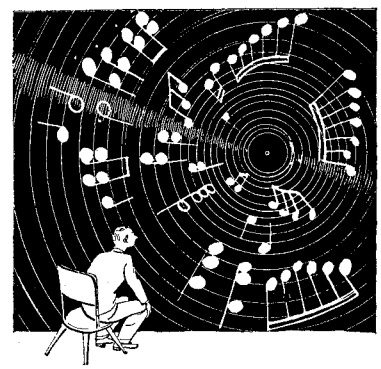
other; yet from one, music will come forth smooth and rich, while from the other it will bear an indefinable quality of "worry" — it will be uncomfortable to listen to, especially over prolonged periods of time.

Some of Weil's notions are regarded by his younger colleagues as outrageous, but not this one. Young Hermon Hosmer Scott, of noise-suppressor fame, figured out as early as 1944 that audio-distortion measurements then in vogue among engineers left out too many factors to work reliably on new, high-performance equipment. At Scott's laboratories, in consequence, although meter dials are not ignored, the final check on an amplifier's design is by ear, using a variety of music as test matter. Apparently some other makers also follow this line of thinking, to judge by results. For there is no doubt the difference can be heard, though it may be hard to describe.



It is worth noting that this procedure parallels that used in recording by EMI studios in England, the high quality of whose disks is a byword. Before any pressing is released, no matter how much money has been spent making it, it must be passed by a technical committee and a musical committee. Either's veto is final.

Probably this is why one U.S. custom-installation man remarked recently that many of his woes would be at an end if each of his dearly beloved customers had one good HMV or English Columbia record wherewith to test his machine when he suspected it of faulty performance. As it is, each time a recording firm overcuts a groove, or an FM station puts a microphone too close to a piano, the installation man is likely to get an indignant phone call: the customer's loudspeaker is rattling nastily!

This leads directly into another problem, the peculiar problem of the man who makes home-music installations. He is often, through the nature of his business, confronted with perfectionist customers. At the same time, his line of business is one which got its big boost as mail-order commerce, at wholesale prices, and he cannot break free of this heritage. This means that, often as not, he has to buy and resell equipment at no profit at all, or at very little profit, for he is still competing with mail-order houses. A single trouble call on any one installation may eat up his entire profit on it. If any proof were needed that audio experts are amateurs at business, this would furnish it. The obvious solution is a service charge for installation, and it may as well be broken gently here that this is in the cards for the future. Television salespeople, of course, knew the angles to begin with and were able to make the so-called "service contract" sound like a bargain.

Probably what the hi-fi manufacturers and dealers need is a trade association. The Audio Engineering Society is hardly fitted to handle commercial policy, though it can set technical standards and it sponsors the Audio Fairs. The latter are run as private promotional ventures by a lawyer named Harry Reizes, who is counsel for the AES and also advertising manager of *Audio Engineering*. It was, as a matter of fact, the magazine's editor, C. G. McProud, who thought of holding the Fairs in the first place. When world conditions permit, Reizes hopes to spread them to Chicago and the West Coast.

This transition from a craft industry to a commercial one is going to involve hazards, of course. For customers, at least, part of the attraction of custom home-music equipment has been that its salesmen weren't really salesmen, but rather fellow enthusiasts.

It is a fact that, up to now, a music lover who bought equipment from these people almost could not be gypped, try as he might. There might be furious squabbles among the experts over the merits of Amplifier A compared with Amplifier B, but it was still true that $200 paid out for either was likely to procure all the value that truly dedicated technicians had been able to cram into it, and that it would yield performance the buyer never had dreamed possible.

Of course, there were also new developments, some exciting in their promise but not yet proved. There were such things as the FAS speaker system, initiated by an amateur named Edmund Flewelling and perfected by the staff of *FM-TV Maga-*

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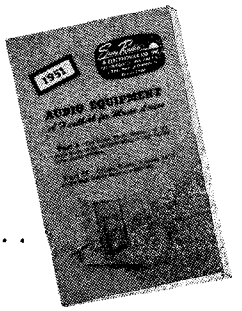

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zine. From a combination of three speakers, all standard make and reasonably priced, it evoked a tremendous throbbing bass, really organlike. The only trouble with it was that no one, including the inventors, seemed to have any idea of how it worked or why it should.

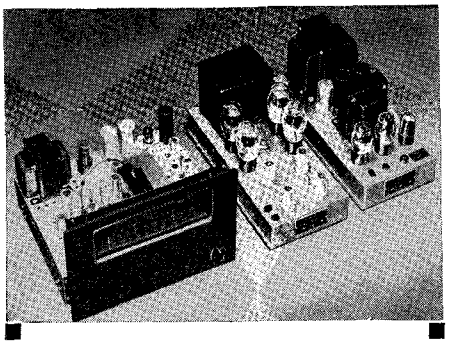
There was the Audax pickup, of which mention has been made. There were a number of new loud-speaker makes. Among these were the British Wharfedales, notable in that they had been designed originally for living-room — or moderate-volume — use, as opposed to U.S. types, whose origin lay in theater sound. The same thing applied to the American Electro-Voice line, one of which, a 12-inch job priced at a little over $20, seemed a good bet to become No. 1 choice in minimum-priced home-music systems.

It was also of interest to note which speakers were chosen by amplifier-makers, for instance, to show off their own wares, and vice versa. Altec Lansing, Jim Lansing, and Stephens speakers seemed to lead, with Jensen and Electro-Voice in the running. Among amplifiers, Brook, McIntosh, Leak (British), Scott, and Peerless were most in evidence, although equal attention went to several U.S. versions of the Williamson-circuit amplifier, with origins in Britain. Audak, Pickering, and GE phono-cartridges led all others, as did Garrard and Webster record-changers (the old Webster model 356-27 substantially outpointing its successor, the 100-1). Among precision turntables, Rek-O-Kut and Presto took first place, with the Pickering pickup-arm an almost uniform accessory. Nearly everyone was using diamond stylus-points, now reckoned from 50 to 100 times longer-lived than any other kind, and available for less than $10. Magnecord, Ampex, and Concertone were the tape recorders most apparent. Among FM tuners, Browning, Brooks, Collins, and Meissner stood out.

As a guide to purchasing, it must be noted, these choices were slightly exclusive: all were the most elaborate (and costly) models available, for obvious reasons.

"They sure are making a joyful noise unto the Lord," said the magazine writer, heading downstairs for a Martini. "All I hope is that we can get deaf again next year, same time, same place, same way."

"Amen!" said his friend.



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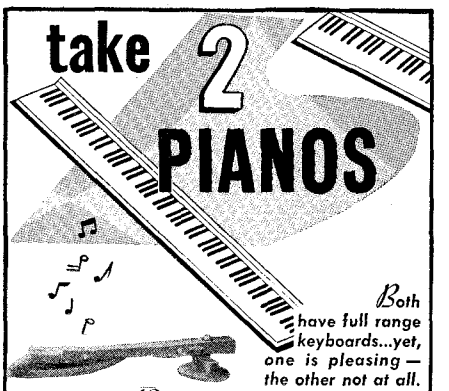

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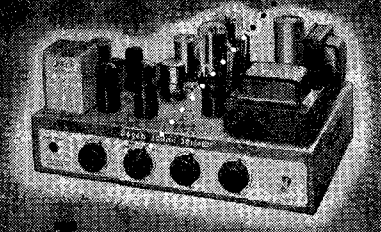

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It's a rare reviewer or collector who can keep up with the vast output of records these days. Here are a few released in recent weeks which may not have got the attention they deserved: —

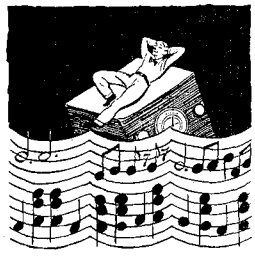
Bach: Cantata No. 51, *Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen* (Elizabeth Schwarzkopf, soprano, and Philharmonia Orchestra, Peter Gellhorn conducting; three 12″ 78's; English Columbia LX8756–8). There is real emotional charge in this, confined in a supremely tasteful performance. Sixth side has *My Heart Ever Faithful* from Cantata No. 68. Recording: excellent.

Bach: Cantata No. 82, *Ich Habe Genug* (Bernhard Sönnerstedt, bass, and Danish State Broadcasting Orchestra, Mogens Wöldike conducting; HMV Z-7027–9). Typical Wöldike performance and Danish recording, meaning practically perfect. This and the foregoing may be bought safely on 78's, too, since apparently EMI studios intend to ride out "the duration" without venturing into LP production, vinylite being hard to get.

Beethoven: Symphony No. 8 in F (San Francisco Symphony, Pierre Monteux conducting; 10″ LP, three 12″ 78's or three 45's; RCA Victor LM(x) 43; DM 1450; WDM 1450). This jovial Frenchman, I should like to suggest, is playing Beethoven better than anyone in the U.S. today except Toscanini (and sometimes Walter) and being better recorded. Lots of instrumental bite; no affectation.

Brahms: Quintet in F Minor, Op. 34 (Clifford Curzon, piano, with the Budapest String Quartet; 12″ LP or five 12″ 78's; Columbia ML 4336 or MM 945). This is Brahms newly matured, un-autumnal, gay, grave, and dynamic by turns and bursting with ideas; a great work, a little sedately played, well recorded.

Britten: Four Sea Interludes from *Peter Grimes* (London Symphony, Sir Malcolm Sargent conducting) together with **Constant Lambert–Sacheverell Sitwell: *The Rio Grande*** (Gladys Ripley, contralto, chorus, and Philharmonia Orchestra,



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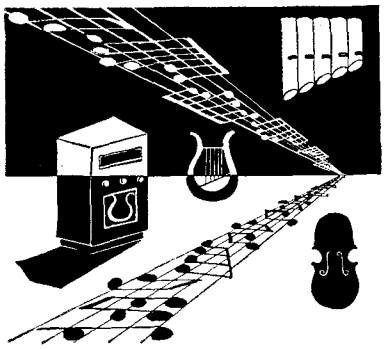

Constant Lambert conducting; 10″ LP; Columbia ML 2145). The Britten, made from English master disks, shows how wide-range a good LP can be without hint of shrillness. The Sitwell-Lambert opus, seldom played, could be called cute if it weren't too good for that.

Handel: Compleat Water Musick (National Gallery Orchestra, Richard Bales conducting; 12″ LP; WCFM LP2). Many, many people must have been waiting years for this. Its full twenty movements include many as fine as the six Hamilton Harty arbitrarily picked for his suite; the playing and recording measure up handsomely. This is almost a must.

Hindemith: Quartet No. 1 in F (Stuyvesant String Quartet; 10″ LP; Philharmonia PHLP 100). Hindemith, before he went truly modern, sounded like Richard Strauss. Recording was made in accord with Audio Engineering Society requirements, yielding good "presence" effect.

Mozart: Concerto in A Major for clarinet and orchestra (Reginald Kell, clarinet, and Zimbler Sinfonietta, Josef Zimbler conducting; 10″ LP; Decca DL 7500). It sounds so easy, but nobody else can do it. Recording: good, but a little lacking in highs.

Mozart: Six Violin and Piano Sonatas — C Major, F Major, B-flat Major, G Major, and two in E-flat Major (Szymon Goldberg, violin, and Lili Kraus, piano; three 12″ LP's; Decca-Parlophone DX 103). These are fine remakes of the "old" Parlophone 78's. The great Lili also has been microgrooved by Decca doing three Haydn trios, the Schubert Sonata No. 143, and the Mozart Concerto No. 18, for all of which, let there be thanks.

Rodgers, Richard, & Hart, Lorentz: *Pal Joey* (Vivienne Segal, Harold Lang, and other soloists with orchestra directed by Lehman Engel; 12″ LP; Columbia ML 4364). This reconstruction of a pleasantly wicked 1943 hit, made with "original cast" zest, spectacularly demonstrates what high-fidelity can do for a Broadway show record. Cheers for some anonymous Columbia engineer!

Rossini: *La Cenerentola* (soloists and Orchestra Radio Italiana, Mario Rossi conducting; two 12″ LP's with libretto; Cetra-Soria LP 1208). For some reason, these "little" operas are what Cetra-Soria does best. This rollicking "Cinderella" is a honey.

Schubert: Quintet in C Major, Op. 163 (Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet, with Guenther Weiss, 2nd cello; 12″ LP; Westminster WL 50–33). This Vienna group is incredibly good; on this and other Westminster releases it sounds as if it might be the best in the world. It's also to be heard in the Schubert Quartet No. 15; the Dvořák Quintet in G Major; Haydn Quartets in D Major and E-flat Major.

Strauss (Johann): *Die Fledermaus* (Vienna State Opera soloists, chorus, and orchestra, Clemens Krauss conducting, with English-German libretto; two 12″ LP's; London LP 281–2). While Columbia and Victor were squabbling over their Metropolitan stars and contracts, for an English-language *Bat*, London foxed them properly with this sumptuous job. Right out of this nasty world.

Strauss (Richard): Duet Concertino, for clarinet, bassoon, strings, and harp; together with **Honegger: Concerto da Camera** (Los Angeles Chamber Symphony, Harold Byrns conducting; 12″ LP; Capitol P-8115). Both of these were written in 1948 and have never been played here. They are utterly charming — melodious, clever, thoughtful, unaffected. Performances and recording are good, too.

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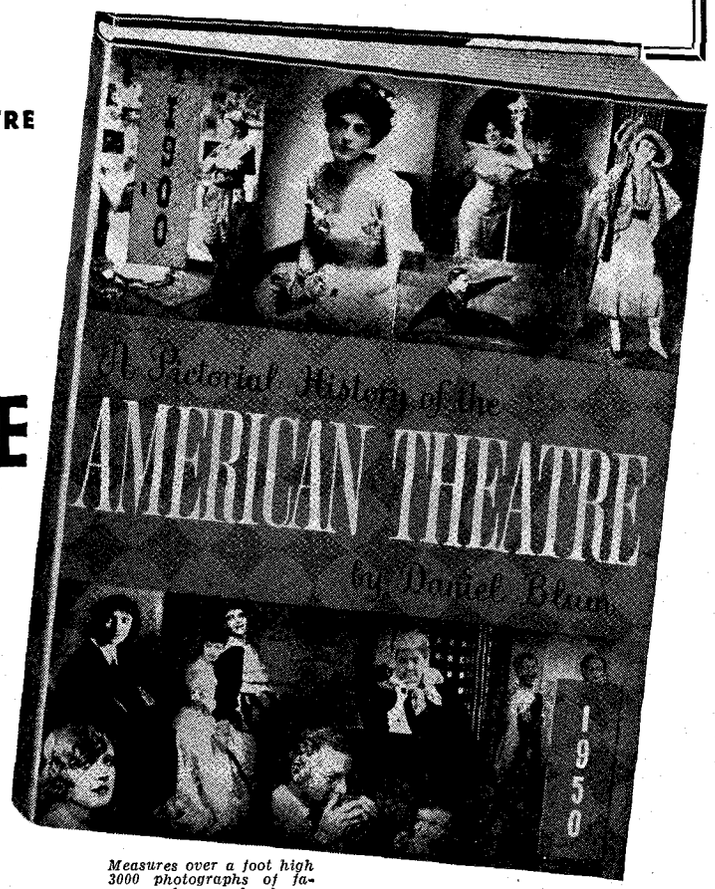

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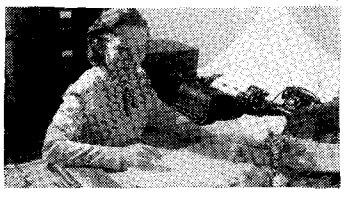

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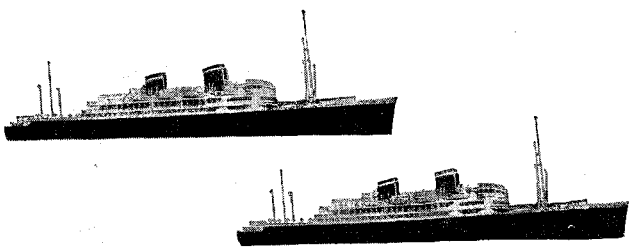

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